"Thou wilt take me with thee, wilt thou not?"

THE NOVELS AND STORIES OF
IVÁN TURGÉNIEFF

ON THE EVE

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY
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PREFACE

In a preface to the complete edition of his works, published in 1880 (the last before his death), Turgénieff furnishes some extremely interesting details about "On the Eve," in the form of a brief episode from his literary career. This episode runs as follows:

"I spent nearly the whole of the year 1855 (as well as the three years preceding) in my village in the Mtzensk county, Orél Government. Among all my neighbours, the one with whom I was most intimate was a certain Vasíly Karatyéeff, a young landed proprietor, aged twenty-five. Karatyéeff was a romantic man and an enthusiast, very fond of music and literature, gifted, in addition, with peculiar humour, amorous, impressionable and straightforward. He had been educated in the Moscow University, and lived in the country with his father, who was seized with an attack of hypochondria, in the nature of insanity, every three years. Karatyéeff had a sister,—a very remarkable being,—who also ended by going insane. All these persons died long ago;—that is why I speak so freely of them. Karatyéeff forced himself to attend to the farming, of which he understood absolutely nothing, and was particularly fond of reading and of conversing with persons who were sympathetic to him. Very few such people were to be found. The

neighbours did not like him, because of his free-thinking and his mocking tongue:—moreover, they were afraid to introduce him to their wives and daughters, because he had a well-established reputation—in reality not in the least deserved by him,—of a dangerous Lovelace. He came frequently to my house, and his visits constituted almost my sole recreation and pleasure at that period, which was not a very cheerful one for me.

"When the Crimean war broke out, and recruiting began among the nobility, under the name of the militia, the nobles of our county who disliked Karatyéeff conspired among themselves, as the saying is, to rid themselves of him,—and elected him the commanding officer of that militia company. On learning of his appointment, Karatyéeff came to me. I was immediately struck by his perturbed and alarmed aspect. His first words were: 'I shall not return thence; I shall not survive it; I shall die there.'

"He could not boast of robust health: his lungs ached constantly, and he was of frail constitution. Although I feared for him all the hardships of the campaign, still I endeavoured to banish his gloomy forebodings and began to assure him that before a year had passed we should meet again in our lonely nook, should see each other, and chat and discuss as of old. But he obstinately persisted in his view; and after a rather prolonged stroll in my park, he suddenly turned to me with the following words:

"'I have a request to make of you. You know that I spent several years in Moscow, but you do not know that I had an experience there which aroused in me the desire to narrate it—both to myself and to others. I have

tried to do so; but I have been forced to the conviction that I possess no literary talent whatsoever—and the whole thing has ended in my writing it down in this copy-book, which I commit to your hands.'

"So saying, he drew from his pocket a small manuscript book, containing about fifty pages. 'I am so firmly convinced,' he went on, 'despite all your friendly consolation, that I shall not return from the Crimea, that I beg you to be so good as to take these rough sketches, and make something out of them which shall not vanish without leaving a trace, as I shall!'

"I tried to refuse; but perceiving that my refusal pained him, I promised to fulfil his wish, and that same evening, after Karatyéeff's departure, I glanced through the book which he had left me. There, in hasty outlines, was sketched that which afterward constituted the substance of 'On the Eve.' The story was not finished, however, and broke off abruptly.

"Karatyéeff, during his residence in Moscow, had fallen in love with a young girl, who reciprocated his affection; but, on making acquaintance with a Bulgarian named Katránoff (a person who, as I afterward learned, had formerly been very famous, and is not forgotten to this day in his native land), had fallen in love with him, and gone off with him to Bulgaria, where he soon died. —The story of this love was given with sincerity but inartistically. Karatyéeff really had not been born for literature. One scene alone, namely, the jaunt to Tzarítzyno, was limned with a good deal of animation—and in my romance I have preserved its chief features.

"Truth to tell, at that time I was turning over other images in my head: I was preparing to write 'Rúdin';

but the task which I afterward tried to fulfil in 'On the Eve' started up before me from time to time. The figure of the principal heroine, Eléna, which was then a new type in Russian life, was pretty clearly defined in my imagination; but a hero was lacking,—the sort of person to whom Eléna, with her confused but powerful impulse toward freedom, could give herself. On perusing Karatyéeff's book I involuntarily exclaimed: 'Here 's the hero whom I have been seeking!'—There was none of that sort, as yet, among contemporary Russians.

"When, on the following day, I saw Karatyéeff, I not only repeated my promise to fulfil his request, but I thanked him for having rescued me from a difficulty, and cast a ray of light into my hitherto dark meditations and inventions. Karatyéeff was delighted, and repeating once more, 'Don't let all that perish,' he went off to serve in the Crimea, whence, to my profound regret, he did not return. His forebodings were realized. He died of typhus in camp near the Putrid Sea, where our Orél militia was stationed,—in earthen huts,—never seeing a single enemy during the whole period of the war, and nevertheless losing, from various maladies, about one-half of its men.

"But I deferred the execution of my promise: I busied myself with other work; on completing 'Rúdin' I began on 'A Nobleman's Nest'; and only in the winter of '58–'59, on finding myself again in the same village and the same surroundings as at the time of my acquaintance with Karatyéeff, did I feel that the slumbering impressions were beginning to stir. I hunted up and re-read his copy-book; the figures which had retreated into the background again advanced into the foreground—and I

immediately took up my pen. A number of my friends knew at the time all which I have now related; but I regard it as my duty now, on the definitive publication of my romances, to communicate it to the public also, and thereby pay at least a tardy tribute to the memory of my poor young friend.

"And this is how a Bulgarian became the hero of my romance. But the Messrs. Critics have unanimously reproached me for the artificiality and lifelessness of that character, have been surprised at my strange caprice in selecting a Bulgarian in particular, and have asked: 'Why? For what reason? What 's the sense of it? '—The casket has simply been opened; but I did not consider it necessary, at that time, to enter into further explanations."

Assuredly, no one of Turgénieff's books raised a greater storm, or provoked so diametrically opposite opinions from the critics. Some declared that Insároff was nothing but another Rúdin; others that he was the precise antithesis of Rúdin. Some admired his reticence, his strength, the high relief in which he was depicted; others called him "shadowy," could detect no force or attraction in him, and jeered at his having captivated Eléna by his "heroic" trip of forty miles, on behalf of his compatriots, and, in particular, his silly feat with the German at Tzarítzyno. Opinions as to Eléna were equally diverse. The point about her which seemed particularly to irritate society and the critics was her abandon-

ment of her home (uncongenial as it was), and the bad example which she thereby set to other Russian girls. The special thing which fairly infuriated many critics was that Turgénieff should have " imported " a hero from outside of Russia, —and from Bulgaria, of all places!—as though no men worthy of a serious maiden's love, or no fine men, were to be found at home. Their acerbity on this score ends by amusing one who peruses the contemporary and later criticisms. The author's explanation quoted above practically nullifies a great deal of what was written about Eléna, as well as about Insároff, of a carping character.

The one thing which not one of them thought of saying—a woman would have said it probably, but the critics were all men—is: that with Eléna's temperament and surroundings it was inevitable that she should fall in love with Insároff, in spite of the fact that he says almost nothing, is represented as merely preparing to act, and actually does nothing except in the two trivial instances cited. This proposition carries with it the corollary that hero and heroine are as faithful to life as are the secondary characters in the book, whom the critics all praised for their fidelity to nature and as genuine artistic creations.

The book was first published in 1860.

I. F. H.

ON THE EVE:

A ROMANCE

(1859)

ON THE EVE:
A ROMANCE

I

IN the shade of a lofty linden-tree, on the bank of the Moscow River, not far from Kúntzovo, two young men were lying on the grass, on one of the very hottest summer days of the year 1853. One, three-and-twenty years of age, judging from his appearance, of lofty stature, swarthy of visage, with a pointed and somewhat crooked nose, a high forehead, and a repressed smile on his broad lips, was lying on his back, and thoughtfully gazing into the distance, with his small, grey eyes screwed up; the other was lying on his chest, with his curly, fair-haired head propped on both hands, and was also gazing at something in the distance. He was three years older than his comrade, but seemed much younger: his moustache was barely sprouting, and a light down curled on his chin. There was something childishly pretty, something alluringly elegant, in the small features of his fresh, round face, in his sweet, brown eyes, his handsome, full lips, and small, white hands. Everything about him exhaled the happy gaiety of

health, breathed forth youth—the unconcern, self-confidence, self-indulgence, and charm of youth. He rolled his eyes about, and smiled, and put his head on one side as small boys do when they know that people like to look at them. He wore an ample white coat, in the nature of a blouse; a blue kerchief encircled his slender neck, a crumpled straw hat lay upon the grass beside him.

In comparison with him, his companion appeared to be an old man, and no one would have thought, to look at his angular form, that he was enjoying himself, that he was at his ease. He was lying in an awkward posture; his large head, broad above and pointed below, was uncouthly set upon his long neck; uncouthness was expressed by every movement of his arms, of his body, clothed in a tight-fitting, short black coat, of his long legs, with elevated knees, resembling the hind legs of a grasshopper. Nevertheless, it was impossible not to recognise the fact that he was a well-bred man; the stamp of "good-breeding" was perceptible all over his ungainly person, and his countenance, which was homely and even somewhat ridiculous, expressed a habit of thought and kindliness. His name was Andréi Petróvitch Berséneff; his comrade, the fair-haired young man, was named Shúbin, Pável Yakóvlitch.

"Why dost thou not lie on thy breast, as I am

doing?" began Shúbin. "It's much better so. Especially when you stick your feet in the air, and click your heels together—this way. The grass is just under your nose: it's tiresome to gaze at the landscape—watch some fat little beetle crawl up a blade of grass, or an ant bustling about. Really it's much nicer. But thou hast assumed a sort of pseudo-classical pose, precisely like a ballet-dancer when she leans her elbows on a cardboard cliff. Remember, that thou hast now a perfect right to rest. It's no joke to have graduated third in the class! Take your rest, sir; cease to strain yourself; stretch out your limbs!"

Shúbin enunciated the whole of this speech through his nose, half-languidly, half-jestingly (spoiled children talk in that manner to the friends of the family, who bring them sugar-plums), and, without waiting for an answer, he went on:

"What surprises me most of all, in the ants, beetles, and other worthy insects, is their wonderful seriousness; they run to and fro with countenances as grave as though their lives were of some importance! Why, good gracious, man, the lord of creation, the most exalted of beings, may be looking at them, but they care nothing for him; perhaps, even, a gnat may alight upon the nose of the lord of creation, and begin to utilise him as food. This is insulting. But, on the other hand, in what respect is their life inferior to ours?

And why should n't they put on airs of importance if we permit ourselves to be pompous? Come now, philosopher, solve this riddle for me! Why dost thou maintain silence? Hey?"

"What . . ." ejaculated Berséneff, coming to himself with a start.

"What!" repeated Shúbin. "Thy friend expounds profound thoughts to thee, and thou dost not listen to him."

"I was admiring the view. Look, how hotly yonder fields are blazing in the sunlight!" (Berséneff lisped a little.)

"A good bit of color that,"—replied Shúbin. —"In a word, it is nature!"

Berséneff shook his head. "Thou shouldst be more enthusiastic over all this than I am. It 's in thy line: thou art an artist."

"No, sir; it 's not in my line,"—retorted Shúbin, and pushed his hat back upon the nape of his neck.—"I 'm a butcher, sir; my business is flesh, modelling flesh, shoulders, feet, hands, but here there are no contours, there is no finish, it melts off in all directions. . . Go, seize it if you can!"

"Why, precisely therein lies its beauty,"—remarked Berséneff. "By the way, hast thou finished thy bas-relief?"

"Which one?"

"The child with the goat."

"Damn it! damn it! damn it!"—exclaimed

Shúbin, in a drawl.—" I 've been looking at the real thing, at the old masters, at the antique, and I 've smashed my miserable stuff. Thou pointest out nature to me, and sayest: ' Therein lies beauty.' Of course, there is beauty in everything, there 's beauty even in thy nose, but one can't run after every bit of beauty. The ancients—why, even they did n't run after it; it descended of itself into their works, God knows whence, perhaps from heaven. The whole world belonged to them; we cannot expand ourselves so widely; our arms are too short. We fling out a bait at one tiny point, and then we watch for results. If there 's a bite, bravo! if there is no bite . . . . ."

Shúbin thrust out his tongue.

" Stop, stop,"—responded Berséneff. " That is a paradox. If thou art not in sympathy with beauty, if thou dost not love it wherever thou encounterest it, it will not give itself to thee in thine art. If a fine view, if fine music, have nothing to say to thy soul,—I mean, if thou art not in sympathy with them . . . ."

" Ekh, get out, thou sympathiser! "—retorted Shúbin hastily, and broke into a laugh at his own newly-coined word, but Berséneff became pensive.—" No, my dear fellow,"—resumed Shúbin, " thou philosopher-sage, third in thy class at the Moscow University, 't is a terrible thing to argue with thee, especially for me, a student who

did not finish his course; but just let me tell thee something: with the exception of my art, I love beauty only in women . . . . in young girls, and that only since quite recently. . . . "

He rolled over on his back, and clasped his hands under his head.

A few moments passed in silence. The stillness of the sultry midday weighed heavily upon the radiant and slumbering earth.

"By the way, speaking of women,"—began Shúbin again.—"Why does n't somebody take Stákhoff in hand? Hast thou seen him in Moscow?"

"No."

"The old fellow has gone quite out of his mind. He sits for whole days together at the house of his Augustína Christiánovna,—he is horribly bored, but there he sits. They gaze at each other, so stupidly. . . . It 's repulsive even to look at. Just think of it! With what a family God has blessed that man: but no, give him his Augustína Christiánovna! I don't know of anything more hideous than her duck-like physiognomy! The other day, I modelled a caricature of her, in Dantesque style. It turned out quite well. I 'll show it to thee."

"And the bust of Eléna Pávlovna,"—inquired Berséneff,—"is that progressing?"

"No, my dear fellow, it is not progressing. That face is enough to drive one to desperation.

You look, and the lines are pure, severe, regular; apparently, there is no difficulty about catching the likeness. Nothing of the sort. . . . It won't yield itself, any more than a treasure will drop into your hands. Hast thou noticed how she listens? Not a single feature moves, only the expression of her glance changes incessantly,—and that alters the whole face. What is a sculptor to do, and a bad sculptor into the bargain? She 's a wonderful being . . . . a strange being,"—he added, after a brief pause.

" She is a wonderful girl,"—Berséneff repeated after him.

" And the daughter of Nikolái Artémievitch Stákhoff! After that, just talk about blood, about race! And the amusing thing is, that she really is his daughter, she resembles him, and resembles her mother, Anna Vasílievna. I respect Anna Vasílievna with all my heart,—she is my benefactress: but she 's a hen, all the same. Where did Eléna get that soul of hers? Who kindled that fire? There 's another riddle for thee, philosopher! "

But the " philosopher," as before, made no reply. In general, Berséneff did not sin through loquacity, and, when he spoke, expressed himself awkwardly, hesitated, gesticulated unnecessarily: but on this occasion a special sort of stillness had descended upon his spirit, a stillness akin to weariness and sadness. He had recently settled

in the country, after a long and difficult task which had occupied him for several hours every day. Inactivity, the softness and purity of the air, the consciousness of having attained his object, the whimsical and careless conversation with his friend, the suddenly-evoked image of a beloved being, all these varied but, at the same time, in some way similar impressions were merged together within him into one general feeling, which soothed, agitated him, and enfeebled him. . . . . He was a very nervous young man. It was cool and quiet beneath the linden-tree; the flies and bees which fluttered about in its shadow seemed to hum in a more subdued manner; the clean, fine grass, of emerald hue, with no golden gleams, did not wave; the tall blades stood motionless as though enchanted; the tiny clusters of yellow blossoms on the lower branches of the linden hung like dead things. Their sweet perfume penetrated into the very depths of the breast with every breath, but the breast inhaled it willingly. Far away, beyond the river, as far as the horizon, everything was glittering and blazing; from time to time a little breeze swept past, and broke and increased the scintillation; a radiant vapour quivered over the earth. No birds were to be heard: they do not sing in the hours of sultry heat; but the grasshoppers were shrilling everywhere, and it was pleasant to listen to that hot sound of life, as one sat in the

shade, at ease: it inclined to slumber, and evoked dreaminess.

"Hast thou observed,"—began Berséneff suddenly, aiding his speech with gesticulations of his arms,—"what a strange feeling Nature arouses in us? Everything about her is so full, so clear, I mean to say, so satisfying in itself, and we understand this, and admire it, and, at the same time, she always—at least in my own case—causes a certain uneasiness, a certain agitation, even sadness. What is the meaning of this? Are we more powerfully conscious in her presence, face to face with her, of all our own incompleteness, our lack of clearness, or is that satisfaction wherewith she contents herself not enough for us, while the other—I mean the one which she does not possess—is necessary for us?"

"H'm,"—replied Shúbin,—"I 'll tell thee, Andréi Petróvitch, whence all this arises. Thou hast described the sensations of the solitary man, who does not live, but merely looks on, and swoons in ecstasy. What 's the good of looking on? Live thyself, and thou wilt be a fine, dashing fellow. Knock at the door of Nature as thou wilt, she will not respond with a single comprehensible word, because she is dumb. She will ring and grieve, like the chord of a lyre, but thou must not expect any song from her. A living soul—and a woman's soul in particular—will respond. Therefore, my noble friend, I counsel

thee to provide thyself with a friend of the heart, and all thy melancholy sensations will immediately vanish. That 's what we ' need,' as thou art wont to say. Seest thou, that agitation, that sadness, is simply a sort of hunger. Give the stomach the right sort of food, and everything will reduce itself to order at once. Take thy place in space, be a body, my dear fellow. And, after all, what is Nature, and what 's the good of her? Just listen: Love . . . what a mighty, burning word! Nature . . . what a cold, scholastic expression! And then" (Shúbin began to chant): "' Long life to Márya Petróvna!' or no," he added, " not to Márya Petróvna, but that makes no difference! *Vous me comprenez.*"

Berséneff half sat up, and propped his chin on his clasped hands.—" Why this raillery,"—he said, without looking at his companion,—" why this jeering? Yes, thou art right: Love is a great word, a great feeling. . . . But of what sort of love art thou speaking? "

Shúbin also half sat up.—" Of what love? Of whatever sort you please, if only it be present. I will confess to thee that, in my opinion, there is no such thing as different sorts of love. . . . If thou hast loved . . . ."

" I have, with all my heart,"—interjected Berséneff.

" Well, yes, that is a matter of course: the soul is not an apple: it cannot be divided. If thou

hast been in love, thou art in the right. And I had no intention to jeer. I have such tenderness in my heart now, it is so softened . . . . I merely wished to explain why nature, according to thee, has that effect upon us. Because she rouses in us the necessity for love, and is not able to satisfy it. She impels us gently to other, living embraces, but we do not understand her, and we expect something from her herself. Akh, Andréi, Andréi, it is beautiful. This sun, this sky, everything, everything around us, is very beautiful, but thou art sad; but if, at this moment, thou heldest in thy hand the hand of a beloved woman, if that hand and the whole woman were thine, if thou wert even gazing with her eyes, feeling not with thine own solitary feeling, but with her feeling,—Nature would not inspire thee with sadness, Andréi, and thou wouldst not begin to notice her beauty: she herself would rejoice and sing, she would join in thy hymn, because thou wouldst then have endowed her, the dumb, with a tongue!"

Shúbin sprang to his feet, and strode back and forth a couple of times, but Berséneff bowed his head, and a slight flush suffused his face.

"I do not entirely agree with thee,"—he began:—"Nature is not always hinting at . . at . . . . . love to us." (He could not utter the word "love" at once.) "She also menaces us: she reminds us of . . . terrible . . . yes, of un-

attainable mysteries. Is not she bound to engulf us, is not she incessantly devouring us? In her are both life and death; and in her death speaks as loudly as life."

"And in love there is both life and death,"—interposed Shúbin.

"And moreover,"—went on Berséneff,—"when I, for example, stand in springtime, in the forest, in a green copse, when I fancy I hear the sounds of Oberon's horn" (Berséneff was a little shamefaced when he had uttered these words)—"is that—"

"It is a thirst for love, a thirst for happiness, nothing else!"—exclaimed Shúbin. "I, too, know those sounds, I know that languor and anticipation which invade the soul beneath the shadows of the forest, in its bosom; or, in the evening, in the open fields, when the sun is setting and the vapour is rising from the river behind the bushes. But from the forest and from the river, and from the earth, and from the sky, from every little cloud, from every blade of grass, I expect, I demand happiness, in everything I feel its approach, I hear its summons. 'My god is a bright and merry god!' That is the way I once began a poem; confess: it was a magnificent first line, but I could n't possibly match it with a second. Happiness! happiness! until life is over, so long as all our members are in our power, so long as we are going not down hill but up hill! Devil take it!"

—continued Shúbin, with sudden fervour—" we are young, we are not monsters, we are not stupid: let us conquer happiness for ourselves!"

He shook his curls, and glanced upward in a self-confident, almost challenging manner at the sky. Berséneff looked at him.

" Is there really nothing higher than happiness?"—he said softly.

" What, for example?"—inquired Shúbin, and paused.

" Why, here, for example, thou and I, as thou sayest, are young; we are good fellows, let us assume; each of us wishes happiness for himself. . . . . But is that word ' happiness ' the sort of word which would have united us, would have kindled us to flame, would have made us offer each other our hands? Is it not an egotistical, a distintegrating word, I mean to say?"

" And dost thou know any words which do unite?"

" Yes,—and there are not a few of them; and thou knowest them also."

" You don't say so? What words are they?"

" Why, take art, for instance,—since thou art an artist,—fatherland, science, liberty, justice."

" And love?"—asked Shúbin.

" Love, also, is a word which unites; but not that love for which thou art now thirsting: not love as enjoyment, but love as sacrifice."

Shúbin frowned.

"That 's all right for the Germans; I want to love for myself; I want to be number one."

"Number one,"—repeated Berséneff.—"But it strikes me that the whole significance of life consists in placing one's self as number two."

"If everybody were to act as thou counsellest,"—remarked Shúbin, with a lugubrious grimace,—"nobody on earth would eat pineapples: everybody would leave them for some one else."

"As a matter of fact, pineapples are not indispensable; however, have no apprehensions: there will always be people to be found who would like to take the bread out of other people's mouths."

The two friends remained silent for a while.

"I met Insároff again the other day,"—began Berséneff:—"I invited him to call on me; I am very anxious to introduce him to thee . . . . and to the Stákhoffs."

"What Insároff is that? Akh, yes, that Servian or Bulgarian, of whom thou hast spoken to me? Is n't it he who has put all those philosophical thoughts into thy head?"

"Perhaps so."

"Is he a remarkable individual?"

"Yes."

"Clever, gifted?"

"Clever? . . . Gifted? I don't know, I don't think so."

"No? What is there remarkable about him?"

"Thou wilt see. But now, I think it is time to be going, Anna Vasílievna is expecting us, I fancy. What time is it?"

"Two o'clock. Come along. How stifling it is! This conversation has set all my blood aflame. And there was a moment when thou, also . . . I 'm not an artist for nothing: I have taken note of everything. Confess, a woman occupies thy mind? . . ."

Shúbin tried to peer into Berséneff's face, but the latter turned away, and emerged from beneath the shade of the linden. Shúbin followed him, treading with graceful swagger on his tiny feet. Berséneff moved clumsily, raised his shoulders high as he walked, thrust forward his neck: but, notwithstanding this, he appeared a better-bred man than Shúbin, more of a gentleman, we should have said, had not that word become so trite among us.

II

The young men descended to the Moscow River, and strolled along its banks. The water exhaled coolness, and the soft plash of the little waves caressed the ear.

"I should like to take another bath,"—remarked Shúbin,—"but I 'm afraid of being late. Look at the river: it is fairly beckoning to us. The ancient Greeks would have recognised it as a nymph. But we are not Greeks, O nymph!—we are thick-skinned Scythians."

"We have water-nymphs also," remarked Berséneff.

"Get out with your water-nymphs! What use have I, a sculptor, for those offspring of a confused, cold fancy, those images born in the reek of a peasant's hut, in the gloom of winter nights? I must have light, space. . . When, my God, shall I go to Italy? When . . . ."

"That is, thou intendest to say, to Little Russia?"

"Shame upon thee, Andréi Petróvitch, to reproach me for a thoughtless bit of stupidity, of which, even without that, I have bitterly repented. Well, yes, I behaved like a fool: Anna Vasílievna, that kindest of women, did give me money

for a trip to Italy, but I betook myself to the Topknots,[1] to eat dough-balls, and . . . ."

"Don't finish thy remark, please,"—interrupted Berséneff.

"Nevertheless, I will say that that money was not spent in vain. I beheld there such types, especially feminine types. . . Of course, I know: outside of Italy there is no salvation!"

"Thou wilt go to Italy,"—remarked Berséneff, without turning toward him—"and thou wilt accomplish nothing. Thou wilt merely flap thy wings, but thou wilt not soar. We know you!"

"But Stavásser soared. . . And he is not the only one. And if I don't soar—it will signify that I am an aquatic penguin, without wings. I 'm stifling here, I want to go to Italy,"—went on Shúbin,—"there is sun, there is beauty there. . ."

A young girl, in a broad-brimmed straw hat, with a rose-coloured parasol over her shoulder, made her appearance, at that moment, in the path along which the two friends were walking.

"But what do I behold? Beauty is coming to meet us even here! The greeting of a humble artist to the enchanting Zóya!"—suddenly exclaimed Shúbin, with a theatrical flourish of his hat.

[1] The scornful Great Russian name for the Little Russian.—TRANSLATOR.

The young girl to whom this exclamation was addressed shook her finger at him, and allowing the two friends to approach her, she said, in a ringing voice, with the merest suggestion of a lisp:

"Why don't you come to dinner, gentlemen? The table is set."

"What do I hear?" said Shúbin, clasping his hands.—"Is it possible that you, charming Zóya, have brought yourself to come in search of us, in this heat? Is that how I am to construe the meaning of your speech? Tell me, can it be? Or no, do not utter that word: repentance will kill me on the spot."

"Akh, do stop, Pável Yakóvlevitch,"—returned the young girl, not without vexation:—"why do you never speak seriously to me? I shall get angry,"—she added, with a coquettish shrug of the shoulders and a pout.

"You will not be angry with me, my ideal Zóya Nikítishna: you will not wish to plunge me into the abyss of wild despair. But I do not know how to talk seriously, because I am not a serious man."

The girl shrugged her shoulders, and turned to Berséneff.

"He is always like that: he treats me like a child; and I am already over eighteen years old. I 'm grown up."

"O heavens!"—moaned Shúbin, and rolled up his eyes; but Berséneff laughed noiselessly.

The girl stamped her little foot.

"Pável Yakóvlevitch! I shall get angry! Hélène started to come with me,"—she went on,—"but stopped behind in the garden. The heat frightened her, but I 'm not afraid of heat. Let us go."

She set out along the path, lightly swaying her slender figure at every step, and tossing back from her face, with her pretty little hand covered with a black mitt, the long, soft locks of her hair.

The friends followed her (Shúbin now silently pressed his hands to his heart, again he raised them above his head), and, a few moments later, they found themselves in front of one of the numerous suburban villas which surround Kúntzovo. A small wooden house, with a partial second storey, painted pink, stood amid a garden, and peeped forth from among the verdure of the trees in a naïve sort of way. Zóya was the first to open the wicket-gate, run into the garden, and cry out: "I have brought the wanderers!" A young girl, with a pale and expressive face, rose from a bench beside the path, and on the threshold of the house a lady in a lilac-silk gown made her appearance, and, raising an embroidered batiste handkerchief above her head to protect it from the sun, she smiled languidly and indolently.

III

Anna Vasílievna Stákhoff, born Shúbin, had been left a full orphan at seven years of age, and heiress to a fairly large property. She had relatives who were very wealthy, and relatives who were very poor; the poor ones on her father's side, the wealthy ones on her mother's: Senator Bólgin, the Princess Tchikurásoff. Prince Ardalión Tchikurásoff, who was appointed as her guardian, placed her in the best boarding-school in Moscow, and when she left school took her into his own house. He lived in handsome style, and gave balls in the winter. Anna Vasílievna's future husband, Nikolái Artémievitch Stákhoff, won her at one of these balls, where she wore "a charming pink gown, with a head-dress of tiny roses." She preserved that head-dress. . . . Nikolái Artémievitch Stákhoff, the son of a retired captain who had been wounded in the year 1812, and had received a lucrative post in Petersburg, had entered the military school at the age of sixteen, and graduated into the Guards. He was handsome, well built, and was considered about the best cavalier at evening parties of the middle class, which he chiefly frequented: he did not have access to fashionable society. Two dreams had

occupied him from his youth up: to become an Imperial aide-de-camp and to make an advantageous marriage; he speedily renounced the first dream, but clung all the more tenaciously to the second. As a result of this, he went to Moscow every winter. Nikolái Artémievitch spoke French very respectably, and had the reputation of being a philosopher, because he did not indulge in carouses. While he was still only an ensign, he had been fond of arguing obstinately on the question, for example, as to whether it is possible for a man, in the course of his whole life, to traverse the entire globe, and whether it is possible for him to know what goes on at the bottom of the sea—and he always maintained the opinion that it is not possible.

Nikolái Artémievitch had passed his twenty-fifth birthday when he "hooked" Anna Vasílievna; he resigned his commission, and retired to the country to engage in farming. Rural existence soon palled on him, and the estate was on a quit-rent basis;[1] he settled in Moscow, in his wife's house. In his youth, he had never played at card-games, but now he became passionately fond of loto, and when that was prohibited, of whist. He was bored to death at home; he entered into relations with a widow of German extraction,

[1] That is, the serfs paid an annual sum for the privilege of being released from agricultural labours for the master, and of earning their living in the towns, at any trade wherein they were skilled.—TRANSLATOR.

and spent almost all his time at her house. In the summer of '53 he did not remove to Kúntzovo; he remained in Moscow, ostensibly with the object of taking a course of mineral waters; in reality, he did not wish to part from his widow. He did not talk much with her, however, but mostly argued as to whether the weather could be predicted, and so forth. Once, some one called him "a *frondeur*"; this appellation pleased him greatly. "Yes," he thought, drawing down the corners of his lips in a self-satisfied way, and swaying to and fro, "I am not easily satisfied; you can't cheat me." Nikolái Artémievitch's critical faculty consisted in this—that, for instance, when he heard the word "nerves," he would say: "And what are nerves?" or some one would allude in his presence to the triumphs of astronomy, and he would say: "And do you believe in astronomy?" But when he wished overwhelmingly to dumfound his antagonist, he said: "All that is mere phrases." It must be confessed that such retorts appeared (and still appear) to many persons irrefutable; but Nikolái Artémievitch had not even a suspicion that Augustína Christiánovna, in her letters to her cousin, called him "*Mein Pinselchen.*"[1]

Nikolái Artémievitch's wife, Anna Vasílievna, was a small, thin woman, with delicate features, inclined to emotion and melancholy. At board-

[1] My simpleton.

ing-school she had busied herself with music, and had read romances, then she had cast aside all this; she had begun to take pleasure in dress, and this taste had persisted; she had undertaken the education of her daughter, but had weakened, and given her over to the hands of a governess; and it ended in her doing nothing whatever, except grieving and indulging in gentle agitation. The birth of Eléna Nikoláevna had shattered her health, and she was not able to have any more children; Nikolái Artémievitch was in the habit of alluding to this circumstance, by way of justifying his acquaintance with Augustína Christiánovna. Her husband's infidelity greatly embittered Anna Vasílievna; what particularly wounded her was that, one day, by a trick, he presented his German with a pair of grey horses from her (Anna Vasílievna's) stud. She never reproached him to his face, but she complained of him, on the sly, to every one in the house in turn, even to her daughter. Anna Vasílievna was not fond of society; it pleased her to have a visitor sit with her, and narrate something; when left alone, she immediately fell ill. She had a very loving and tender heart: life speedily ground her between the millstones.

Pável Yakólevitch Shúbin was her grandnephew. His father was in the government service in Moscow. His brothers had entered the cadet corps; he was the youngest, his mother's

darling, of delicate constitution: he remained at home. He had been destined for the university, and had passed his examinations with difficulty. From his earliest years, he had begun to display an inclination for sculpture: ponderous Senator Bólgin one day saw a statuette of himself at his aunt's (the lad was sixteen years old at that time), and declared that he intended to protect the youthful talent. The sudden death of Shúbin's father came near changing the young man's whole future. The senator, the patron of talent, presented him with a plaster bust of Homer—and that was all; but Anna Vasílievna aided him with money, and in a lame sort of fashion, at the age of nineteen, he entered the medical course of the university. Pável felt no predilection for medicine, but, according to the distribution of the students which existed at that period, it was impossible for him to enter any other course; moreover, he hoped to study anatomy. But he did not study anatomy; he did not pass into the second year, and without waiting for the examinations, he left the university, to devote himself wholly to his vocation. He toiled zealously, but by fits and starts; he roamed about the environs of Moscow; he modelled and drew the portraits of peasant maidens; he entered into relations with various persons, young and old, of high and low degree, —with Italian model-makers and Russian artists; he would not listen to the suggestion of the

Academy, and recognised no professor. He possessed decided talent: he began to be known in Moscow. His mother, a Parisian by birth, taught him French, bustled and worried about him day and night, was proud of him, and when she died of consumption, at an early age, she entreated Anna Vasílievna to take charge of him. He was then in his twenty-first year. Anna Vasílievna complied with her last wish: he occupied a small chamber in a wing of the house.

IV

"Come, let us go to dinner,"—said the mistress of the house, in a mournful voice, and all betook themselves to the dining-room.—"Sit next to me, Zoé,"—said Anna Vasílievna; "and do thou, Hélène, entertain our guest; and please, Paul, do not play pranks and do not tease Zoé. I have a headache to-day."

Again Shúbin rolled his eyes heavenward; Zoé replied to him by a half-smile. This Zoé, or, to speak more accurately, Zóya Nikítishna Müller, was a pretty, little, slightly cross-eyed Russian German, with a little nose cleft at the tip, and tiny red lips, fair-haired and plump. She sang Russian romances far from badly, played neatly on the piano divers pieces, sometimes merry, sometimes sentimental; she dressed with taste, but in a childish way, somehow, and too spotlessly. Anna Vasílievna had taken her as a companion for her daughter, but kept her almost uninterruptedly by her own side. Eléna made no complaint on this score: she positively did not know what to say to Zóya when she chanced to be left alone with her.

The dinner lasted rather a long time; Bersé-

neff chatted with Eléna about university life, about his intentions and hopes. Shúbin listened, and maintained silence, eating with exaggerated avidity, and from time to time casting comical mournful glances at Zóya, who responded to him with the same phlegmatic smile as before. After dinner, Eléna went into the garden with Berséneff and Shúbin; Zóya gazed after them, and slightly shrugging her shoulders, seated herself at the piano. Anna Vasílievna began to say: "Why don't you go for a walk also?" but without waiting for an answer, she added: "Play me something sad. . . ."

"*La dernière pensée de Weber?*" asked Zóya.

"Akh, yes, Weber,"—said Anna Vasílievna, dropping into an arm-chair, and a tear sprang to her eyelashes.

Meanwhile, Eléna had led the friends to an arbour of lilacs, with a small wooden table in the centre, and benches all round it. Shúbin cast a glance around, gave several little skips, and saying in a whisper, "Wait!" ran off to his own room, brought a lump of clay, and began to model a figure of Zóya, shaking his head, muttering, and laughing the while.

"At your old tricks again,"—remarked Eléna, with a glance at his work, and turned to Berséneff, with whom she pursued the conversation which had been begun at dinner.

"My old tricks!"—repeated Shúbin.—"The

subject is downright inexhaustible! To-day, in particular, she drove me beyond patience."

"Why so?" inquired Eléna.—"One would think that you were talking about some malicious, disagreeable old hag. A pretty, young girl . . . ."

"Of course,"—interrupted Shúbin,—"she is pretty, very pretty; I am convinced that any passer-by, on glancing at her, is inevitably bound to think: 'There 's a girl with whom it would be pleasant to . . . dance a polka;' I am also convinced that she knows this, and that it is agreeable to her.—Why those bashful grimaces, that modesty? Come, you know very well what I mean to say," he added through his teeth.—"However, you are otherwise occupied at present."

And, smashing Zóya's figure, Shúbin set hastily, and as though vexed, to moulding and kneading his clay.

"And so, you would like to be a professor?"—Eléna asked Berséneff.

"Yes," replied the latter, crushing his red hands between his knees. "That is my cherished dream. Of course, I am very well aware of everything which I lack to become worthy of so lofty . . . . I mean to say that I am too inadequately prepared, but I hope to receive permission to go abroad; I shall remain there three or four years, if necessary, and then . . . . ."

He paused, dropped his eyes, then suddenly raised them and, with an awkward smile, smoothed back his hair. When Berséneff talked with a woman, his speech became still more deliberate, and he lisped still more decidedly.

"You wish to be a professor of history?"—inquired Eléna.

"Yes, or of philosophy,"—he added, lowering his voice,—"if that should prove to be possible."

"He is already devilish strong in philosophy,"—remarked Shúbin, making deep lines with his finger-nail in the clay,—"so why should he go abroad?"

"And shall you be perfectly satisfied with your position?"—asked Eléna, resting her elbow on the table, and looking him straight in the face.

"Perfectly, Eléna Nikoláevna, perfectly. What profession can be better? Upon my word, to follow in the footsteps of Timoféi Nikoláevitch. . . . . The mere thought of such a career fills me with joy and agitation,—yes, ... with agitation, which . . . . which springs from the consciousness of my own small powers. My deceased father gave me his blessing on that matter. . . . . I shall never forget his last words."

"Did your father die last winter?"

"Yes, Eléna Nikoláevna, in February."

"They say,"—pursued Eléna,—"that he left a remarkable work in manuscript: is that true?"

"Yes, he did. He was a wonderful man. You would have loved him, Eléna Nikoláevna."

"I am convinced of that. And what are the contents of that work?"

"It is somewhat difficult to convey to you the contents of the work in a few words, Eléna Nikoláevna. My father was a learned man, a Schellingist: he employed terms which are not always lucid. . . ."

"Andréi Petróvitch,"—Eléna interrupted him,—"pardon my ignorance; but what does a Schellingist mean?"

Berséneff smiled slightly.

"A Schellingist signifies, a follower of Schelling, the German philosopher; and Schelling's doctrine consisted in . . . . ."

"Andréi Petróvitch!"—suddenly exclaimed Shúbin:—"for God's sake! Thou dost not intend to deliver a lecture on Schelling to Eléna Nikoláevna? Spare her!"

"It is not a lecture at all," muttered Berséneff, and flushed crimson,—"I wanted . . . ."

"And why not a lecture?"—interposed Eléna; "you and I are greatly in need of a lecture, Pável Yakóvlevitch."

Shúbin fixed his eyes on her, and suddenly burst out laughing.

"What are you laughing at?"—she asked coldly and almost sharply.

Shúbin stopped short.

" Come now, don't get angry,"—he said, after a pause.—" I beg your pardon. But really, what possesses you,—good gracious!—now, in such weather, under these trees, to discuss philosophy? Let us talk, rather, about nightingales, about roses, about youthful eyes and smiles."

" Yes, and about French romances, and woman's fripperies," went on Eléna.

" And about fripperies, if you like," retorted Shúbin, " if they are pretty."

" Very well. But what if we do not care to talk about fripperies? You call yourself a free artist, why do you infringe upon the freedom of others? And permit me to ask you, if that 's your way of thinking, why you attack Zóya? It is particularly convenient to discuss fripperies and roses with her."

Shúbin suddenly flared up, and half rose from the bench.—" Ah, you don't say so? " he began, in a nervous voice.—" I understand your hint; you are sending me off to her, Eléna Nikoláevna. In other words, I am intruding here."

" I had no thought of sending you away from here."

" You mean to say,"—went on Shúbin testily, —" that I am not worthy of any other society, that I am a mate for her, that I am as empty and silly and shallow as that sickly-sweet little German? Is n't that so, madam? "

Eléna contracted her brows.—" You have not

always expressed yourself about her in that manner, Pável Yakóvlevitch," she remarked.

"Ah! reproach! reproach, now!" cried Shúbin. —"Well, yes, I do not conceal the fact, there was a moment—precisely that, one moment—when those fresh, commonplace little cheeks . . . . But if I wished to pay you back with reproach, and remind you . . . . Good-bye, madam," he suddenly added,—"I am on the point of talking at random."

And dealing a blow upon the clay, which he had moulded into the shape of a head, he rushed out of the arbour and went off to his own room.

"A child,"—remarked Eléna, gazing after him.

"An artist," said Berséneff, with a gentle smile.—"All artists are like that. One must pardon them their caprices. That is their prerogative."

"Yes," returned Eléna,—"but, so far, Pável has not established that prerogative for himself. What has he accomplished up to the present time? Give me your arm, and let us walk in the avenue. He disturbed us. We were talking about your father's writings."

Berséneff gave Eléna his arm, and went into the garden with her; but the conversation which had been begun, having been broken off too soon, was not renewed. Berséneff again began to set forth his views on the vocation of professor, on

his future career. He moved quietly by Eléna's side, stepped awkwardly, supported her arm clumsily, now and then jostled her with his shoulder, and never once looked at her; but his speech flowed lightly, if not quite freely, he expressed himself simply and pertinently, and in his eyes, which roved slowly over the boles of the trees, over the sand of the path, over the grass, there beamed the quiet emotion of noble feelings, and in his tranquil voice there was audible the joy of a man who is conscious that he is successfully expressing himself to another person who is dear to him. Eléna listened attentively to him, and, half turned toward him, never removed her eyes from his face, which had paled slightly,—from his eyes, which were friendly and gentle, although they avoided an encounter with her eyes. Her soul unclosed, and something tender, just, good, was poured into her heart, or sprang up within it.

V

Shúbin did not leave his room until nightfall. It was already perfectly dark; the moon, not yet at the full, hung high in the heaven, the Milky Way gleamed white, and the stars had begun to stud the sky, when Berséneff, having taken his leave of Anna Vasílievna, Eléna, and Zóya, went to his friend's door. He found it locked, and tapped.

"Who 's there?" rang out Shúbin's voice.

"I,"—replied Berséneff.

"What dost thou want?"

"Let me in, Pável; have done with thy caprices; art not thou ashamed of thyself?"

"I 'm not capricious; I 'm asleep, and beholding Zóya in my dreams."

"Stop that, please. Thou art not a child. Let me in. I must have a talk with thee."

"Hast not thou talked enough already with Eléna?"

"Have done, have done with that; let me in!"

Shúbin replied by a feigned snore; Berséneff shrugged his shoulders, and went home.

The night was warm, and, somehow, peculiarly quiet, as though everything round about were

listening and watching; and Berséneff, enveloped by the motionless mist, involuntarily came to a halt, and began also to listen and watch. A faint murmur, like the rustle of a woman's gown, arose from time to time in the crests of the trees near by, and excited in Berséneff a sweet and painful sensation—a sensation of semi-alarm. Little shivers coursed down his cheeks, his eyes were chilled with quick-springing tears; he would have liked to walk absolutely without noise, to hide himself, to steal along stealthily. A keen little breeze attacked him on the flank: he shivered slightly, and stood stock-still; a sleepy beetle tumbled from a bough and landed on the path with a clatter: Berséneff emitted a soft "Ah!" and again came to a halt. But he began to think of Eléna, and all these transient sensations instantly vanished; only the vivifying impression of the nocturnal freshness, and the nocturnal stroll, and the image of the young girl absorbed his whole soul. Berséneff walked on with drooping head, and called to mind her words, her questions. It seemed to him that he heard the tread of rapid footsteps behind him. He listened intently: some one was running, some one was pursuing him; the panting breath was audible, and all at once, out of the black circle of shadow cast by a huge tree, Shúbin popped up in front of him, with no hat upon his dishevelled hair, and ghastly pale in the moonlight.

"I am glad thou hast taken this path," he articulated with difficulty; "I should not have slept all night if I had not overtaken thee. Give me thine arm. Thou art on thy way home, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"I will accompany thee."

"But how wilt thou go without thy hat?"

"Never mind about that. I have taken off my neckcloth also. It is warm now."

The friends advanced a few paces.

"I was very foolish to-day, was n't I?" asked Shúbin suddenly.

"To speak frankly, yes. I could not understand thee. I have never seen thee like that. And what was it that angered thee, pray? A few trifles!"

"H'm!" muttered Shúbin.—"What a way thou hast of expressing thyself!—but I am in no mood for trifles. Seest thou," he added,—"I am bound to inform thee, that I . . . . that . . . . Think of me what thou wilt . . . . I . . . . well, here goes! I am in love with Eléna!"

"Thou art in love with Eléna!"—repeated Berséneff, and stopped short.

"Yes," went on Shúbin, with forced carelessness.—"Does that surprise thee? I will tell thee more. Until this evening I was able to hope that, in course of time, she would come to love me. . . . But to-day I have become convinced

that I have nothing to hope for,—she has fallen in love with some one else."

"With some one else? With whom, then?"

"With whom? With thee!" cried Shúbin, and slapped Berséneff on the shoulder.

"With me!"

"With thee,"—repeated Shúbin.

Berséneff fell back a pace, and stood stock-still. Shúbin gazed keenly at him.

"And does that surprise thee? Thou art a modest youth. But she does love thee. . . . Thou mayest rest at ease on that score."

"What nonsense thou art chattering!" ejaculated Berséneff, at last, with vexation.

"No, it is n't nonsense. But why are we standing here? Let 's go on. It 's easier when we are walking. I have known her for a long time, and I know her well. I cannot be mistaken. Thou art after her own heart. There was a time when she liked me: but, in the first place, I am too frivolous a young man for her, while thou art a serious being, thou art a morally and physically clean individual, thou . . . . Stay, I am not through. . . Thou art a conscientious enthusiast, a genuine representative of those priests of science, of which,—no, not of which,—of *whom,* —of whom the middle-class Russian gentry are so justly proud. And, in the second place, the other day, Eléna caught me kissing Zóya's arms!"

"Zóya's?"

"Yes, Zóya's. What wouldst thou have me do? She has such fine shoulders."

"Shoulders?"

"Why, yes, shoulders—arms—is n't it all the same? Eléna caught me in the midst of these familiar occupations after dinner, while before dinner I had been objurgating Zóya in her presence. Eléna, unfortunately, does not understand how perfectly natural such contradictions are. Then *thou* didst turn up: thou art a believer . . . what the deuce is it that thou believest in? . . . thou art eloquent, thou blushest, thou growest confused, thou grievest over Schiller, over Schelling (and she is always hunting up distinguished persons), and so thou hast carried off the victory, while unhappy I endeavour to jest . . . and . . . nevertheless . . ."

Shúbin suddenly burst into tears, stepped aside, sat down on the ground, and clutched himself by the hair.

Berséneff went up to him.

"Pável,"—he began,—"what childishness is this? Good gracious! What is the matter with thee to-day? God knows what nonsense thou hast taken into thy head. And thou art weeping! Really, it seems to me that thou art pretending."

Shúbin raised his head. The tears glistened on his cheeks in the moonlight, but his face was smiling.

"Andréi Petróvitch,"—he said,—"thou may-

est think of me what thou wilt. I am even ready to admit that I have a fit of hysterics at the present moment; but God is my witness that I am in love with Eléna, and that Eléna loves thee. However, I promised to escort thee home, and I will keep my word."

He rose.

"What a night! silvery, dark, young! How fine it is now for those who are in love! How delightful they find it not to sleep! Shalt thou sleep, Andréi Petróvitch?"

Berséneff made no reply, and accelerated his gait.

"Why art thou in such a hurry?"—went on Shúbin.—"Trust my words, such a night will never be repeated in thy life. But Schelling awaits thee at home. He has done thee a service to-day, 't is true; but do not hasten, nevertheless. Sing, if thou knowest how,—sing still more loudly; if thou dost not know how—take off thy hat, throw back thy head, and smile at the stars. They are all gazing at thee—at thee alone: the stars do nothing else but gaze at people who are in love,—that is why they are so charming. Thou art in love, art thou not, Andréi Petróvitch? . . . Thou dost not answer me. . . . Why dost thou not answer?"—began Shúbin again.—"Oh, if thou feelest thyself happy, hold thy peace, hold thy peace! I chatter, because I am an unlucky wretch, I am not beloved; I am a juggler, an artist, a

buffoon; but what wordless raptures would not I quaff in these nocturnal streams of light, beneath these stars, beneath these brilliants, if I knew that I were loved? . . . . Berséneff, art thou happy?"

Berséneff remained silent, as before, and strode swiftly along the level road. Ahead, among the trees, the lights of the hamlet in which he lived began to twinkle; it consisted of half a score, in all, of small villas. At its very beginning, on the right of the road, beneath two wide-spreading birch-trees, was a tiny shop; all its windows were already closed, but a broad streak of light fell in fan-shape from the open door, upon the trampled grass, and surged upward upon the trees, sharply illuminating the whitish under side of their dense foliage. A young girl, a lady's maid, to all appearance, was standing in the shop, with her back to the road, and bargaining with the shopkeeper: from beneath the red kerchief, which she had thrown over her head, and held fast under her chin with her bare hand, her plump cheek and slender neck were just visible. The young men stepped into the band of light, Shúbin glanced at the interior of the shop, halted, and, exclaimed: "Ánnushka!" The young girl turned briskly round. A pretty, rather broad, but rosy face, with merry brown eyes and black brows, was revealed.—"Ánnushka!"—repeated Shúbin. The girl looked at him, took fright,

grew abashed—and without finishing her purchase, descended the steps, slipped hastily past, and with hardly a glance behind her walked down the road to the left. The shopkeeper, a corpulent man and indifferent to everything in the world, like all suburban shopkeepers, grunted and yawned after her, while Shúbin turned to Berséneff with the words: "That . . that . . thou seest . . . . I am acquainted with a family here . . . thou must not think. . . ." and without finishing his speech, he ran after the retreating girl.

"Wipe away thy tears, at least,"—shouted Berséneff after him, and could not refrain from laughing. But when he reached home, the expression of his face was not merry; he was no longer laughing. Not for one moment did he believe what Shúbin had said to him, but the words he had uttered had sunk deep into his soul. "Pável was making a fool of me,"—he thought . . . "but when she does fall in love . . . whom will she love?"

A piano stood in Berséneff's room, small and not new, but with a soft and agreeable, although not quite pure tone. Berséneff sat down at it, and began to strike chords. Like all Russian nobles, he had studied music in his childhood, and, like almost all Russian nobles, he played very badly; but he was passionately fond of music. Properly speaking, what he loved in it was

not the art, nor the forms wherewith it expresses itself (symphonies and sonatas, even operas, made him low-spirited), but its poetry: he loved those sweet and troubled, aimless and all-embracing emotions which are evoked in the soul by blending and the shifting successions of sounds. For more than an hour he did not leave the piano, repeating the same chords over and over many times, awkwardly seeking new ones, pausing and allowing the sounds to die away on diminished sevenths. His heart ached within him, and his eyes were more than once suffused with tears. He was not ashamed of them; he was shedding them in the dark. "Pável is right," he thought; "I have a presentiment that he is right: this evening will not be repeated." At last he rose, lighted a candle, donned his dressing-gown, took from its shelf the second volume of Raumer's "History of the Hohenstaufens,"—and heaving a sigh or two, began to read diligently.

VI

In the meantime, Eléna had returned to her own chamber, seated herself in front of the open window, and leaned her head on her hand. It had become her habit to spend a quarter of an hour every evening at the window of her chamber. During that time, she held converse with herself, rendered herself an account of the day that was past. She had recently celebrated her twentieth birthday. She was tall of stature, had a pale and dark-skinned face, large grey eyes under arched brows, surrounded with tiny freckles, a perfectly regular brow and nose, a tightly compressed mouth, and a decidedly pointed chin. The braids of her dark-chestnut hair hung low on her slender neck. In the whole of her being, in the expression of her face, which was attentive and somewhat timid, in her mutable glance, in her smile, which seemed strained, in her soft and uneven voice, there was something nervous, electrical, something impulsive and precipitate,—in a word, something which could not please every one, which even repelled some people. Her hands were narrow, rosy, with long fingers; her feet also were narrow; she walked rapidly, almost impetuously,

with her body slightly bent forward. She had grown up very strangely; at first she had worshipped her father, then she had become passionately attached to her mother, and had cooled toward both of them, especially toward her father. Of late, she had treated her mother like an ailing grandmother; and her father, who had been proud of her, as long as she had possessed the reputation of being a remarkable child, began to be afraid of her when she grew up, and said of her, that she was some sort of an enthusiastic republican, God knows whom she took after! Weakness agitated her, stupidity angered her, a lie she never forgave "unto ages of ages";[1] her demands made no concessions to anything whatever, her very prayers were often mingled with reproach. A person had but to lose her respect, —and she promptly pronounced judgment, often too promptly,—and he forthwith ceased to exist for her. All impressions took deep root in her soul: she did not take life easily.

The governess to whom Anna Vasílievna had entrusted the task of finishing her daughter's education,—an education, we may remark in parenthesis, which had never even been begun by the bored young lady—was a Russian, the daughter of a ruined bribe-taker, graduate of a Government Institute, a very sentimental, ami-

[1] The equivalent, in the Eastern Church, of "for ever and ever."—TRANSLATOR.

able, and deceitful creature; she was forever falling in love, and ended by marrying, in her fiftieth year (when Eléna had already passed her seventeenth birthday), some officer or other who immediately abandoned her. This governess had been very fond of literature, and was herself in the habit of scribbling bad verses; she imbued Eléna with a taste for reading, but reading alone did not satisfy the girl; from her childhood up, she had thirsted for activity, for active good: the poor, the hungry, the sick, interested her, disturbed, tortured her; she saw them in her dreams, she questioned all her acquaintances about them; she bestowed alms carefully, with an involuntary air of gravity, almost with emotion. All oppressed animals,—gaunt watch-dogs, kittens condemned to death, sparrows which had tumbled out of the nest, even insects and reptiles found a protector and defender in Eléna; she tended them herself, she did not despise them. Her mother did not interfere with her; on the other hand, her father was very much incensed with his daughter for her vulgar coddling, as he called it, and declared that one could not take a step in the house without treading on a dog or a cat. "Lénotchka,"—he would shout at her, "come hither, make haste, a spider is sucking a fly, release the unhappy victim!" And Lénotchka, all in a flutter would run to him, release the fly, and separate its legs which were stuck together. "Come, now,

let it bite thee, if thou art so kind," remarked her father ironically; but she paid no heed to him. At the age of ten, Eléna made acquaintance with a poor little girl, Kátya, and was in the habit of going in secret to meet her in the garden. She carried her dainties, made her presents of kerchiefs, and ten-kopék coins—Kátya accepted no toys. She sat down beside her on the dry earth, in the thicket, behind a clump of nettles; with a sensation of joyous humility she ate her black bread, listened to her stories. Kátya had an aunt, an ill-tempered old woman, who frequently beat her; Kátya hated her, and was always talking about running away from her aunt, and of how she would live entirely free from all restraint. With secret reverence and terror, Eléna listened to these new, unfamiliar words, stared attentively at Kátya, and at such times everything about her —her black, quick eyes, almost like those of a wild beast, her sunburned arms, her dull little voice, even her tattered clothing—seemed to Eléna to be something peculiar, almost holy. Eléna would return home, and for a long time thereafter think about the poor, about God's will; she thought of how she would cut herself a staff from a nut-tree, throw a beggar's wallet over her shoulder, and run off with Kátya; how she would roam about the highways in a wreath of corn-flowers: she had once seen Kátya with such a wreath. If one of her relatives entered the room at that

moment, she became shy, and looked queer. One day, she ran through the rain to her rendezvous with Kátya, and splashed her frock; her father caught sight of her and called her a slut, a little peasant. She flushed crimson all over, and had a terrible and wonderful sensation at her heart. Kátya often hummed some half-barbarous, soldiers' ditty; Eléna learned the song from her . . . . Anna Vasílievna overheard her, and flew into a rage.

"Where hast thou picked up that abomination?"—she asked her daughter. Eléna merely stared at her mother, and said not a word: she felt that she would sooner allow herself to be rent in pieces than to betray her secret, and again she had a sweet and terrified feeling in her heart. However, her acquaintance with Kátya did not last long: the poor little girl fell ill of a fever, and died a few days later.

Eléna grieved greatly, and it was long before she could get to sleep at night after she heard of Kátya's death. The last words of the little beggar child rang incessantly in her ears, and it seemed to her that they were calling her. . . .

But the years followed years; swiftly and inaudibly, like the waters beneath the snows, Eléna's youth flowed past in outward idleness, in inward strife and unrest. She had no friends: she did not become intimate with a single one of the young girls who visited the Stákhoffs' house.

Parental authority never weighed heavily upon Eléna, and at the age of sixteen she became almost entirely independent; she lived her own life, but a lonely life. Her soul burned and expired alone, she beat her wings like a bird in a cage, but there was no cage: no one checked her, no one restrained her, yet she was restless and pined. Sometimes she did not understand herself, she was even afraid of herself. Everything around her seemed to her either senseless or incomprehensible. "How can one live without love? but there is no one to love!" she thought, and fear fell upon her at that thought, at those sensations. At eighteen, she came near dying of a malignant fever. Shaken to the very foundations, her whole organism, strong and healthy by nature, was unable, for a long time, to recover itself; the last traces of illness disappeared, at last, but Eléna Nikoláevna's father still talked, not without wrath, about her nerves. Sometimes she took it into her head that she wanted something which no one, in the whole of Russia, wishes, thinks of. Then she calmed down, even laughed at herself, spent day after day in careless unconcern; but suddenly something powerful, nameless, which she was not able to control, fairly seethed up within her, and demanded to burst its way out. The tempest passed over, the weary wings, which had not soared, drooped; but these fits left their mark upon her. Try as she would not to betray

what was taking place within her, the sadness of her agitated soul was revealed in her very external composure, and her relatives often had a right to shrug their shoulders, to marvel, and to fail to comprehend her " peculiarities."

On the day upon which our story began, Eléna did not leave her window until long after her accustomed time. She thought a great deal about Berséneff, about her conversation with him. She liked him; she had faith in the warmth of his feelings, in the purity of his intentions. Never before had he talked with her as on that evening. She recalled the expression of his bold eyes, of his smile—and smiled herself, and fell into reverie, but it was no longer about him. She set to gazing out into " the night " through the open window. For a long time she gazed at the dark, low-hanging heaven; then she rose, with a gesture tossed the hair back from her face, and, without herself knowing why, she stretched out, toward that heaven, her bare, cold arms; then she dropped them, knelt down before her bed, pressed her face to her pillow, and in spite of all her efforts not to yield to the feeling which was sweeping in upon her, she fell to weeping with strange, amazed, but burning tears.

VII

On the following day, at twelve o'clock, Berséneff set out for Moscow with a cabman who was returning thither. He had to get some money from the post-office to purchase certain books, and he wished, incidentally, to see Insároff and have a conference with him. The idea had occurred to Berséneff, during his last chat with Shúbin, to invite Insároff to visit him at the villa. But he did not speedily find him: he had removed from his former lodgings to other quarters, which were awkward to reach. They were situated in the rear courtyard of a hideous stone house, built in the Petersburg style, between Arbát Square and Povarskáya Street. In vain did Berséneff wander from one dirty entrance to another, in vain did he call out now to the yard-porter, now to "somebody." Even in Petersburg the yard-porters endeavour to avoid the gaze of visitors, and much more so in Moscow: no one answered Berséneff's shouts: only a curious tailor, in nothing but his waistcoat, and with a skein of grey thread on his shoulder, silently thrust through the hinged pane of a window high up his dull and unshaven face. with black, bruised

eyes, and a black, hornless goat, which had climbed upon a dung-heap turned round, bleated pitifully, and began to chew its cud more briskly than before. A woman in an old sleeved cloak and patched shoes took pity, at last, upon Berséneff, and pointed out to him Insároff's lodgings. Berséneff found him at home. He had hired a chamber from the very tailor who had gazed so indifferently from the hinged pane at the embarrassment of the straying man,—a large, almost perfectly bare chamber, with dark-green walls, three square windows, a tiny bed in one corner, a leather-covered couch in another, and a huge cage suspended close to the ceiling; in this cage a nightingale had once lived. Insároff advanced to meet Berséneff as soon as the latter crossed the threshold, but did not exclaim, "Ah, is that you!" or, "Akh, my God! what brings you here?" He did not even say, "Good-morning," but simply shook him by the hand, and led him to the only chair in the room.

"Sit down,"—he said, and seated himself on the edge of the table.

"Things are still in disorder with me, as you see,"—added Insároff, pointing at a pile of papers and books on the floor; "I have not yet installed myself properly. I have not had time as yet."

Insároff spoke Russian with perfect correctness, pronouncing each word strongly and

clearly; but his guttural, though agreeable voice had a certain ring which was not Russian. Insároff's foreign extraction (he was a Bulgarian by birth) was still more plainly apparent in his personal appearance: he was a young man five-and-twenty years of age, thin and wiry, with a hollow chest and angular arms; he had sharp features, a nose with a hump, bluish-black straight hair, a small forehead, small deep-set eyes with an intent gaze, and thick eyebrows; when he smiled, very handsome white teeth made their appearance for an instant from beneath thick, harsh, too clearly outlined lips. He was dressed in an old but neat frock-coat, buttoned to the chin.

"Why have you removed from your former lodging?"—Berséneff asked him.

"This one is cheaper; it is nearer the university."

"But it is vacation-time now . . . And what possesses you to live in town during the summer? You ought to have hired a villa, if you had made up your mind to move."

Insároff made no reply to this remark, and offered Berséneff a pipe, with the words: "Excuse me, I have no cigarettes or cigars."

Berséneff lighted the pipe.

"Now I," he went on,—"have hired a little house near Kúntzovo. It is very cheap, and very convenient. So that there is even an extra room up-stairs."

Again Insároff made no reply.

Berséneff stretched himself.

" I have even been thinking,"—he began again, emitting the smoke in a thin stream,—" that if, for example, I were to find any one . . . you, for example,—that is what I was thinking . . . . who would like . . . . who would consent to install himself up-stairs in my house . . . . how nice it would be! What do you think of it, Dmítry Nikanóritch? "

Insároff turned his small eyes on him.—" Are you proposing that I should live with you in your villa? "

" Yes; I have an extra chamber up-stairs."

" I am very much obliged to you, Andréi Petróvitch; but I do not think that my means will permit me to do it."

" What do you mean by that? "

" They will not permit me to live in a villa. I cannot afford two sets of lodgings."

" Why, but I . . . " Berséneff began, then paused.—" You would not be at any extra expense,"—he went on.—" Your present lodgings could be retained for you, let us assume; on the other hand, everything is very cheap there; we might even arrange, for example, to dine together."

Insároff maintained silence, Berséneff felt awkward.

" At all events, come and visit me sometime,"—

he began, after waiting a while.—" A couple of steps from me lives a family with whom I am very anxious to make you acquainted. If you only knew, Insároff, what a splendid young girl there is there! One of my most intimate friends lives there also, a man of great talent; I am convinced that you will take to him." (A Russian loves to stand treat—if with nothing else, then with his acquaintances.)—" Really, now, do come. But, better still, come and live with us,—really you ought. We might work together, read . . . you know, I am busying myself with history and philosophy. You are interested in all that. I have a great many books."

Insároff rose and paced the room.—" Allow me to inquire,"—he asked at last,—" how much you pay for your villa?"

" One hundred rubles."

" And how many rooms has it?"

" Five."

" Consequently, by computation, one room would cost twenty rubles?"

" Yes. . . But, good gracious! I don't need it at all. It is simply standing empty."

" Possibly; but listen,"—added Insároff with a decided but, at the same time, ingenuous movement of the head:—" I can accept your proposition only in case you will consent to take the money from me according to the computation. I am able to give twenty rubles, the more so as,

according to your words, I shall be effecting an economy on everything else there."

"Of course; but, really, I am ashamed to do it."

"It cannot be done otherwise, Andréi Petróvitch."

"Well, as you like; only, what an obstinate fellow you are!"

Again Insároff said nothing.

The young men came to an agreement as to the day on which Insároff was to move. They called the landlord, but first he sent his daughter, a a little girl seven years of age, with a huge, motley-hued kerchief on her head; she listened with attention, almost in affright, to everything Insároff said to her, and silently went away; after her, her mother, who was near her confinement, made her appearance, also with a kerchief on her head, only it was tiny. Insároff explained to her that he was going to move to a country villa near Kúntzovo, but retained the lodging, and entrusted all his things to her; the tailor's wife also seemed to take fright, and retired. Finally, the master of the house came; at first, he seemed to understand all about it, and only remarked thoughtfully: "Near Kúntzovo?" but then suddenly flung open the door, and shouted, "Are the lodgings to be kept for you, pray?" Insároff soothed him. "Because, I must know," repeated the tailor gruffly, and disappeared.

Berséneff went his way, very much pleased with the success of his proposition. Insároff escorted him to the door, with an amiable courtesy which is not much in use in Russia; and when he was left alone, he carefully removed his coat, and busied himself with putting his papers in order.

VIII

On the evening of that same day, Anna Vasílievna was sitting in her drawing-room, and preparing to weep. Besides herself, there were in the room her husband and a certain Uvár Ivánovitch Stákhoff, Nicolái Artémievitch's great-uncle, a cornet on the retired list, aged sixty, a man obese to the point of being unable to move, with small, sleepy, yellow eyes, and thick, colourless lips in a bloated yellow face. Ever since his retirement from the army, he had lived uninterruptedly in Moscow on the interest from a small capital which had been bequeathed to him by his wife, a member of the merchant class. He did nothing, and it is hardly probable that he thought; but if he did think, he kept his thoughts to himself. Only once in the course of his life had he become excited and displayed activity, namely: when he read in the newspapers about a new instrument at the London International Exposition: a "controbombardon," and wanted to import that instrument, and even inquired where he was to send the money, and through what office. Uvár Ivánovitch wore a capacious sack-coat, snuff-brown in hue, and a white necker-

chief, ate much and often, and only in embarrassing circumstances,—that is to say, on every occasion when it behooved him to express any opinion,—did he wiggle the fingers of his right hand convulsively in the air, beginning first with the thumb and running to the little finger, then beginning with the little finger and ending with the thumb, with difficulty articulating: " It ought . . . somehow, you know . . ."

Uvár Ivánovitch was seated in an arm-chair by the window and breathing hard, Nikolái Artémievitch was pacing up and down the room with great strides, with his hands thrust into his pockets: his face expressed displeasure.

He came to a halt, at last, and shook his head. —" Yes,"—he began,—" in our day, young people were brought up differently. Young people did not permit themselves to be lacking in respect for their elders." (He pronounced the *man*[1] through his nose, in French fashion.) " But now, all I can do is to look on and marvel. Perhaps *I* am not right, and they are; but I was not a born dolt. What do you think about it, Uvár Ivánovitch? "

Uvár Ivánovitch merely stared at him, and twiddled his fingers.

" There is Eléna Nikoláevna, for instance,"—pursued Nikolái Artémievitch—" I don't understand Eléna Nikoláevna, really I don't. I 'm not

[1] *Mankírovat*, to be lacking in respect.—Translator.

sufficiently lofty for her. Her heart is so capacious that it embraces all nature, down to the very tiniest cockroach or frog,—in a word, everything, with the exception of her father. Well, very good; I know it, and I don't meddle. For it is a question of nerves, and learning, and soaring heavenward, and all that is not in our line. But Mr. Shúbin . . . let us assume that he is an artist, a wonderful, remarkable artist, I do not dispute that; but for him to be lacking in respect toward his elder, toward a man to whom, nevertheless, he may be said to owe a great deal,—that is what I, I must confess, *dans mon gros bon sens,* cannot allow. I am not exacting by nature, no, but there is a limit to all things."

Anna Vasílievna rang the bell in an agitated manner. A page entered.

"Why does not Pável Yakóvlevitch come?" she said. "Why cannot I get him to come?"

Nikolái Artémievitch shrugged his shoulders. —"But why, for goodness sake, do you want to summon him? I am not demanding it in the least, I do not even desire it.

"Why do you ask the reason, Nikolái Artémievitch? He has disturbed you; perhaps he has interfered with your course of treatment. I want to call him to account. I want to know in what way he has angered you."

"I tell you again that I do not demand it.

And what possesses you . . . *devant les domestiques* . . . ."

Anna Vasílievna blushed slightly.—" There is no need of your saying that, Nikolái Artémievitch. I never . . . *devant* . . . . *les domestiques* . . . Go away, Fédiushka, and see that thou bringest Pável Yakóvlevitch hither immediately."

The page left the room.

" But that is not in the least necessary,"—muttered Nikolái Artémievitch between his teeth, and again he began to stride up and down the room. " I had not that in view at all, when I started the subject."

" Mercy me! Paul ought to apologise to you."

" Good heavens! What do I want of his apologies? And what are apologies? Mere phrases."

" What do you mean by not wanting him to apologise? He must be brought to his senses."

" Bring him to his senses yourself. He will listen to you more readily than to me. But I make no charges against him."

" Really, Nikolái Artémievitch, you have been out of humour ever since your arrival to-day. I have even seen you growing thin before my very eyes. I 'm afraid your course of treatment is not helping you."

" My course of treatment is indispensable to me,"—remarked Nikolái Artémievitch; "my liver is out of order."

At that moment, Shúbin entered. He seemed weary. A slight, almost mocking smile played about his lips.

"You sent for me, Anna Vasílievna?"—he said.

"Yes, of course I sent for thee. Good heavens! Paul, this is terrible. I am very much displeased with thee. How canst thou be lacking in respect to Nikolái Artémievitch?"

"Has Nikolái Artémievitch been complaining to you about me?"—asked Shúbin, and glanced at Stákhoff, with the same mocking smile on his lips. The latter turned away and dropped his eyes.

"Yes, he has. I do not know how thou art to blame toward him, but thou must apologise instantly, because his health is very much shaken at present; and, in short, we are all bound, in our youth, to respect our benefactors."

"Ekh, is that logic?" thought Shúbin, and turned to Stákhoff.—"I am ready to apologise to you, Nikolái Artémievitch," he said with a courteous half-bow, "if I really have offended you in any way."

"I did n't in the least . . . mean it that way,"—returned Nikolái Artémievitch, as before avoiding Shúbin's eyes.—"However, I willingly pardon you, because, you know, I am not an exacting man."

"Oh, there is not the slightest doubt about

that!"—said Shúbin. "But permit me to inquire whether Anna Vasílievna is acquainted with the precise nature of my offence?"

"No, I know nothing,"—remarked Anna Vasílievna, and stretched out her neck.

"Oh, gracious heavens!"—exclaimed Nikolái Artémievitch hastily:—"how many times already have I begged and entreated, how many times have I said how repugnant to me are all these explanations and scenes! When a man comes home once in an age, he wants to rest,—I tell you, in the domestic circle, *intérieur,* he wants to be a family man;—but there are scenes, unpleasantnesses. There 's not a minute's peace. One is forced to go to the club . . or somewhere . . against his will. The man is alive, he has a physical side, it has its demands, but here . . . ."

And without completing the phrase he had begun, Nikolái Artémievitch swiftly quitted the room and banged the door. Anna Vasílievna gazed after him.—"To the club?"—she whispered bitterly:—"You are not going to the club, giddypate! There is no one at the club to whom you can give horses from my stud-farm—and grey ones, at that! My favourite colour. Yes, yes, a light-minded man!"—she added, raising her voice:—"You are not going to the club. As for thee, Paul,"—she continued, as she rose,—"art not thou ashamed of thyself? Thou art not a child, I think. There now, I have a

headache coming on. Where is Zóya, dost thou know?"

"I think she is up-stairs, in her own room. That sagacious little fox always hides herself in her own den in such weather as this."

"Come now, please, please stop that!"—Anna Vasílievna fumbled about her.

"Hast thou seen my wine-glass of grated horse-radish? Paul, please do not anger me in future."

"Why should I anger you, Aunty? Let me kiss your hand. And I saw your horse-radish on a little table in the boudoir."

"Dárya is forever forgetting it somewhere or other,"—said Anna Vasílievna, and went away, rustling her silk gown.

Shúbin started to follow her, but paused on hearing behind him the deliberate voice of Uvár Ivánovitch.

"Thou didst not get . . . . what thou hast deserved . . . . puppy,"—said the retired cornet, with stops and pauses.

Shúbin stepped up to him.—"And for what ought I to have been punished, laudable Uvár Ivánovitch?"

"For what? Thou art young, therefore respect. Yes."

"Whom?"

"Whom? Thou knowest well whom. Grin away."

Shúbin folded his arms on his chest.

"Akh, you representative of primitive, universal principle,"—he exclaimed,—"you black-earth force, you foundation of the social edifice!"

Uvár Ivánovitch wiggled his fingers.—"Enough, my good fellow; don't try my patience."

"Here you have a nobleman who is not young, apparently,"—went on Shúbin,—"yet how much happy, childish faith still lies smouldering within him! Revere him! But do you know, you elemental man, why Nikolái Artémievitch is wroth with me? You see, I spent the whole morning, to-day, with him, at his German woman's; you see, we sang a trio to-day, 'Leave me not'; you just ought to have heard it. That would affect you, I think. We sang, my dear sir, we sang—well, and I got bored; I saw that things were not as they should be; there was a lot of tenderness. I began to tease them both. It turned out finely. First she got angry with me; then with him; then he got furious with her, and told her that he was happy nowhere but at home, and that he had a paradise there; and I said to her: 'Ach!' German fashion; he went away, and I remained; he came hither,—to paradise, that is to say,—but paradise nauseates him. So he took to growling. Well, sir, and who is to blame now, in your opinion?"

"Thou, of course,"—replied Uvár Ivánovitch.

Shúbin stared at him.—"May I make so bold as to ask you, respected knight-errant,"—he be-

gan, in an obsequious voice:—" whether it is your pleasure to utter those enigmatic words in consequence of some combination of your thinking faculties, or under the inspiration of the momentary necessity to produce that vibration known as sound? "

" Don't tempt me,"—groaned Uvár Ivánovitch. . . .

Shúbin laughed, and ran out of the room.—" Hey, there,"—shouted Uvár Ivánovitch, a quarter of an hour later:—" I say . . . . . a glass of whiskey."

The page brought the whiskey and a little solid refreshment on a tray. Uvár Ivánovitch softly took the wine-glass from the tray, and stared at it long and intently, as though he did not quite understand what sort of thing he had in his hand. Then he looked at the page and asked if his name were not Váska. Then he assumed a pained expression, took a bite, and dived into his pocket for his handkerchief. But the page had long since carried off the tray and the carafe to their place, and had eaten the remains of the herring, and had already succeeded in falling asleep, leaning up against his master's overcoat, while Uvár Ivánovitch was still holding his handkerchief in front of his face with outspread fingers, and staring now out of the window, now at the floor and walls, with the same fixed attention.

IX

Shúbin returned to his own chamber in the wing and was about to open a book. Nikolái Artémievitch's valet cautiously entered the room and handed him a small, three-cornered note, the seal of which bore a large coat-of-arms.—"I hope," ran this note, "that you, as an honourable man, will not permit yourself to hint, by so much as a single word, at a certain note of hand which was discussed this morning. You know my relations and my principles, the insignificance of the sum itself, and other circumstances,—in short, there are family secrets which must be respected, and family peace is such a sacred thing, that only *êtres sans cœurs,* among whom I have no reason to reckon you, repudiate them! (Return this note.) N. S."

Shúbin scrawled below it, with a pencil: "Don't worry, I don't pick people's pockets of their handkerchiefs yet"; returned the note to the valet, and again took up his book. But it soon slipped from his hands. He gazed at the crimson sky, at two sturdy young pine-trees, which stood apart from the other trees, and thought: "Pine-trees are blue by daylight, but how mag-

nificently green they are in the evening," and betook himself to the garden, in the secret hope of meeting Eléna there. He was not disappointed. Ahead of him, on the path between the shrubs, her gown was fluttering. He overtook her, and as he came alongside, he said:

"Don't glance in my direction, I am not worthy of it."

She cast a fleeting glance at him, gave an evanescent smile, and pursued her way toward the depths of the garden. Shúbin followed her.

"I request that you will not look at me,"—he began—"yet I address you: a manifest contradiction! But that makes no difference: it 's not the first time I 've done it. I just remembered that I had not yet asked your pardon, in proper form, for my stupid sally of yesterday. You are not angry with me, Eléna Nikoláevna?"

She paused, and did not answer him at once—not because she was angry, but her thoughts were far away.

"No,"—she said at last,—"I am not in the least angry."

Shúbin bit his lip.

"What an anxious . . . and what an indifferent face!" he murmured.—"Eléna Nikoláevna,"—he went on, raising his voice:—"permit me to narrate to you a little anecdote. I had a friend; this friend also had a friend, who first behaved himself as an honest man should, and then took

to drink. So, early one morning, my friend meets him on the street (and please to observe that they had ceased to know each other)—meets him, and perceives that he is drunk. My friend took and turned away from him. But the other man stepped up, and says: 'I would n't have been angry if you had not bowed, but why do you turn away? Perhaps I do this from grief. Peace to my ashes!'"

Shúbin relapsed into silence.

"Is that all?"—asks Eléna.

"Yes."

"I do not understand you. What are you hinting at? You just told me not to look in your direction."

"Yes, but now I have told you how bad it is to turn away."

"But did I . . . " Eléna was beginning.

"But did n't you?"

Eléna flushed faintly, and offered Shúbin her hand. He pressed it firmly.

"You seem to have caught me in ill-feeling," —said Eléna,—"but your suspicion is unjust. I never even thought of avoiding you."

"Let us admit that, let us admit it. But confess that at this moment you have in your head a thousand thoughts, not one of which you will confide to me. Well? am not I speaking the truth?"

"Perhaps so."

"But why is it? Why?"

"My thoughts are not clear to myself,"—said Eléna.

"That is precisely the reason why you should confide them to another person,"—interposed Shúbin. "But I will tell you what the matter is. You have a bad opinion of me."

"I?"

"Yes, you. You imagine that everything about me is half-spurious, because I am an artist; that I not only am not capable of any business whatever,—as to that, you are, in all probability, quite right,—but even of any genuine, profound feeling; that I cannot even weep sincerely, that I am a chatterbox and a scandal-monger,—all because I am an artist. After that, are n't we unfortunate, God-slain people? You, for example, whom I am ready to worship, do not believe in my repentance."

"Yes, Pável Yakóvlevitch, I do believe in your repentance, I believe in your tears. But it seems to me, that your very repentance amuses you, and so do your tears."

Shúbin shuddered.

"Well, as the doctors express it, I seem to be an incurable case, *casus incurabilis*. All that is left for me to do, is to bow my head and submit. But in the meantime, O Lord, can it be true, can it be that I am forever fretting over myself, when such a soul is living by my side? And to know, that one will never penetrate into that soul,

will never find out, why it grieves, why it rejoices, what is fermenting within it, what it craves, whither it is going. . . . Tell me,"—he said, after a brief pause:—" would you never, for any consideration, under any circumstances whatever, fall in love with an artist? "

Eléna looked him straight in the eye.

" I think not, Pável Yakóvlevitch; no."

" Which remains to be demonstrated,"—remarked Shúbin, with comical dejection.—" After this, I assume that it would be more decent for me not to interfere with your solitary stroll. A professor would have asked you: ' But on the foundation of what data have you said no? ' But I am not a professor, I am a child, according to your view; so remember, do not turn away from children. Farewell. Peace to my ashes! "

Eléna was on the point of detaining him, but changed her mind and said:—" Farewell."

Shúbin quitted the yard. At a short distance from the Stákhoffs' villa Berséneff met him. He was walking with brisk strides, with bowed head, and his hat pushed back on his nape.

" Andréi Petróvitch! "—shouted Shúbin.

The latter came to a halt.

" Go along, go along,"—continued Shúbin:—" I did it thoughtlessly, I will not detain thee,—and wend thy way straight to the garden; thou wilt find Eléna there.—She is expecting thee, I think . . . . she is expecting some one, at any

rate. . . . Dost thou understand the force of the words 'she is expecting'? And knowest thou, brother, one remarkable circumstance? Imagine, here I have been living in the same house with her for two years. I am in love with her, and yet it was only just now, a moment ago, that I have —not precisely understood but—seen her. I have seen her, and thrown apart my hands in despair. Don't look at me, please, with that falsely sarcastic grin, which is not very becoming to thy sedate features. Well, yes, I understand, thou wouldst remind me of Ánnushka. What of that? I don't deny it. Ánnushkas are mates for such fellows as I. So, long live the Ánnushkas, and the Zóyas, and even the very Augustína Christiánovnas! Go along to Eléna, now, while I go off to . . . . to Ánnushka, art thou thinking? No, brother, brother, worse; to Prince Tchikurásoff. He 's a Mæcenas of Kazán Tatar origin, after the style of Bólgin. Seest thou this note of invitation, these letters: R. S. V. P.? Even in the country I have no peace. *Addio!*"

Berséneff listened to Shúbin's tirade to the end, in silence and as though somewhat ashamed on his account, then he entered the yard of the Stákhoff villa. And Shúbin really did go to Prince Tchikurásoff, to whom he uttered, with the most amiable mien, the most pointed impertinences. The Mæcenas of Kazán Tatar origin shouted with laughter, the Mæcenas's guests

laughed also, and no one was merry, and when they parted all were in a rage. Thus do two slightly-acquainted gentlemen, when they meet on the Névsky, suddenly display their teeth in a grin at each other, mawkishly wrinkle up their eyes, noses, and cheeks, and then immediately, as soon as they have passed each other, assume their former indifferent or morose, chiefly apoplectic expression.

X

Eléna received Berséneff in a friendly manner, not in the garden, but in the drawing-room, and immediately, almost impatiently, renewed their conversation of the previous evening. She was alone: Nikolái Artémievitch had quietly slipped off somewhere, Anna Vasílievna was lying down up-stairs with a wet bandage on her head. Zóya was sitting beside her, with her skirt primly arranged, and her hands folded on her knees; Uvár Ivánovitch was reposing in the mezzanine on a broad, comfortable divan, which had received the nickname of "the doze-compeller." Again Berséneff alluded to his father: he held his memory sacred. Let us say a few words about him.

The owner of eighty-two souls,[1] whom he emancipated before his death, an *illuminatus,* a former student at Göttingen, the author of a manuscript work, "The Presentations or Prefigurings of the Soul in the World,"—a work wherein Schellingism, Swedenborgianism, and republicanism were intermingled in the most original manner—Berséneff's father brought him to Moscow while he was still a small lad, immediately after the death of his mother, and himself

[1] Male serfs.—Translator.

undertook his education. He prepared himself for every lesson, and toiled with remarkable conscientiousness and with utter lack of success: he was a dreamer, a book-worm, a mystic, he talked with a stutter, in a dull voice, expressed himself obscurely and in an involved way, chiefly in comparisons, and was abashed even in the presence of his son, whom he passionately loved. It is not surprising that the son was merely staggered by his lessons, and did not advance a hair's breadth. The old man (he was about fifty years of age, having married very late in life) divined, at last, that things were not going as they should, and placed his Andriúsha in a boarding-school. Andriúsha began to learn, but did not escape from parental oversight: the father visited him incessantly, boring the head of the school to death with his exhortations and conversations; the inspectors also were bored by the unbidden visitor: he was constantly bringing them what they called most amazing books on education. Even the scholars felt uncomfortable at the sight of the old man's tanned and pock-marked face, his gaunt figure, constantly clad in a spike-tailed grey dress-coat. The school-boys never suspected that this surly gentleman, who never smiled, with his stork-like gait and long nose, heartily sympathised and grieved with every one of them, almost the same as he did with his own son. One day he took it into his head to harangue them on the subject of

Washington: "Youthful nurslings!" he began, but at the first sounds of his queer voice the youthful nurslings dispersed. The honest graduate of Göttingen did not live on roses: he was constantly crushed by the course of history, by all sorts of problems and considerations. When young Berséneff entered the university, he accompanied him to the lectures; but his health had already begun to fail. The events of the year '48 shattered it to the very foundation (he was forced to make his book all over), and he died in the winter of the year 1853, before his son graduated from the university, but not until he had congratulated him in advance on having obtained his degree, and consecrated him to the service of science. "I transfer the torch to thee,"—he said to him, two hours before his death,—"I have held it as long as I could, do not thou let go of the torch until the end."

Berséneff talked for a long time to Eléna about his father. The awkwardness which he had felt in her presence vanished, and he did not lisp as badly as before. The conversation turned on the university.

"Tell me,"—Eléna asked him,—"were there any remarkable individuals among your comrades?"

Again Berséneff recalled Shúbin.

"No, Eléna Nikoláevna, to tell you the truth, there was not a single individual of mark among

us. Yes, and why should there be! There was such a time at the Moscow University, they say! Only, not now. Now it is a school, not a university. I have had a hard time with my comrades," he added, dropping his head.

"A hard time? . . . . ." whispered Eléna.

"However,"—went on Berséneff,—"I must correct myself: I know one student—he is not in my course, it is true—who really is a remarkable man."

"What is his name?"—asked Eléna with vivacity.

"Insároff, Dmítry Nikanórovitch. He is a Bulgarian."

"Not a Russian?"

"No, not a Russian."

"But why is he living in Moscow?"

"He has come hither to study. And do you know, with what object he is studying? He has a certain idea: the liberation of his native land. And his lot is unusual. His father was a fairly well-to-do merchant, a native of Tirnóvo. Tirnóvo is now a small town, but in olden times it used to be the capital of Bulgaria, when Bulgaria was still an independent kingdom. He traded in Sofía, he had relations with Russia; his sister, Insároff's own aunt, still lives in Kíeff, married to a former teacher of history in a gymnasium there. In 1835, that is to say, about eighteen years ago, a frightful crime was perpe-

trated: Insároff's mother suddenly disappeared, without leaving a trace: a week later, she was found with her throat cut."

Eléna shuddered. Berséneff paused.

"Go on, go on," she said.

"Rumours were in circulation that she had been abducted and murdered by a Turkish Aga; her husband, Insároff's father, discovered the truth and wanted to avenge himself, but he only wounded the Aga with his dagger. . . He was shot."

"Shot? Without a trial?"

"Yes. Insároff at that time was in his eighth year. He was left on the hands of the neighbours. His sister learned of the fate of her brother's family, and wanted to have her nephew with her. He was taken to Odessa, and thence to Kíeff. In Kíeff he lived for twelve years. That is why he speaks Russian so well."

"Does he speak Russian?"

"As well as you and I do. When he was twenty years of age (that was in the beginning of 1848), he wanted to return to his native land. He went to Sofía and Tirnóvo, and traversed the whole of Bulgaria, in its length and breadth, spent two years there, and learned his native language again. The Turkish government persecuted him, and probably, during those two years, he was subjected to great perils; I once saw on his neck a broad scar, which must have been the

vestige of a wound; but he does not like to talk about it. He is a taciturn fellow, also, in his way. I have tried to make him tell me all about it,—but in vain. He replies in general phrases. He is frightfully stubborn. In the year 1850 he returned again to Russia, to Moscow, with the intention of perfecting his culture, of getting better acquainted with the Russians. Later on, when he graduates from the university . . . . . ."

"And what then?" interrupted Eléna.

"Whatever God sends. It is difficult to conjecture in advance."

For a long time Eléna did not remove her eyes from Berséneff.

"You have interested me greatly with your story," she said.—"What is he like personally, that friend of yours,—what did you say his name is? . . . Insároff?"

"How can I tell you? He is not bad-looking, according to my taste. But you shall see him for yourself."

"How so?"

"I shall bring him hither to your house. He is coming to our hamlet the day after to-morrow, and is to live in the same lodgings with me."

"Really? But will he care to come to us?"

"I should say so! He will be very glad to come."

"He is not proud."

"He?—He? Not in the least. That is to say,

he is proud, if you like to call it that, but not in the sense in which you mean. For instance, he will not borrow money from any one!"

"And is he poor?"

"Yes, he is not rich. When he went to Bulgaria, he got together a few crumbs, which had remained intact of his father's property, and his aunt aids him; but all that is a mere trifle."

"He must have a great deal of character,"—remarked Eléna.

"Yes. He is a man of iron. And, at the same time, as you will see, there is something childlike, sincere about him, with all his concentration, and even secretiveness. In truth, his sincerity is not our trashy sincerity, the sincerity of people who have absolutely nothing to conceal. . . . . But I will bring him to you,—just wait."

"And he is not shy?"—Eléna put another question.

"No, he is not shy. Only self-conceited people are shy."

"And are you conceited?"

Berséneff became confused, and flung his hands apart.

"You arouse my curiosity,"—continued Eléna. —"But come, tell me, did not he avenge himself on that Turkish Aga?"

Berséneff smiled.

"People avenge themselves only in romances, Eléna Nikoláevna; and, moreover, in the twelve

years which had elapsed, the Aga might have died."

"But has Mr. Insároff told you nothing about it?"

"Nothing."

"Why did he go to Sofía?"

"His father had lived there."

Eléna became thoughtful.

"To free his fatherland!"—she said.—"Those are awkward words even to utter, they are so great. . . . ."

At that moment, Anna Vasílievna entered the room, and the conversation came to an end.

Strange sensations agitated Berséneff when he returned home that evening. He did not repent of his intention to make Eléna acquainted with Insároff: he regarded as very natural the profound impression which his recitals about the young Bulgarian had produced. . . . Had not he himself endeavoured to strengthen that impression! But a secret and gloomy feeling stealthily made its nest in his heart; he was depressed with a sadness which was not pleasant. This sadness did not, however, prevent his taking up the "History of the Hohenstaufens," and beginning to read it, at the very same page where he had left off on the previous evening.

XI

Two days later, Insároff, in accordance with his promise, presented himself to Berséneff with his luggage. He had no servant, but he put his room in order without any assistance, placed the furniture, wiped up the dust, and swept the floor. He fidgeted for a particularly long time over the writing-table, which absolutely refused to fit the wall-space designated for it; but Insároff, with the taciturn persistence peculiar to him, had his way. Having got settled, he asked Berséneff to take from him ten rubles in advance, and arming himself with a stout staff, he set off to inspect the environs of his new residence. He returned, three hours later, and in reply to Berséneff's invitation to share his meal, he said that he would not refuse to dine with him that day, but he had already made an arrangement with the landlady, and thenceforth he would get his food from her.

"Good gracious!"—retorted Berséneff: "You will be badly fed: that woman does not know the first thing about cooking. Why are not you willing to dine with me? We could have shared the expense."

"My means do not permit me to dine as you do,"—replied Insároff, with a calm smile.

There was something about that smile which did not admit of insistence: Berséneff did not add a word. After dinner, he proposed to Insároff that he should take him to the Stákhoffs; but the latter replied that he intended to devote the entire evening to writing to his Bulgarian correspondents, and therefore begged him to defer the visit to the Stákhoffs until another day. Berséneff was already acquainted with the inflexibility of Insároff's will, but only now, when he found himself under the same roof with him, was he definitively able to convince himself of the fact that Insároff never changed any of his decisions, just as he never put off the fulfilment of a promise he had once given. This more than German punctiliousness seemed, at first, brutal, and even slightly ridiculous, to Berséneff, a radically Russian man; but he speedily became accustomed to it, and ended by thinking it, if not worthy of respect, at least extremely convenient.

On the day after his removal, Insároff rose at four o'clock in the morning, explored nearly the whole of Kúntzovo, bathed in the river, drank a glass of cold milk, and set to work; and he had not a little work on hand: he was studying Russian history, and law, and political economy, and was translating Bulgarian ballads and chronicles, collecting materials concerning the Eastern Ques-

tion, compiling a Russian grammar for the Bulgarians, and a Bulgarian grammar for the Russians. Berséneff dropped into his room, and talked to him about Feuerbach. Insároff listened to him attentively, and replied rarely, but practically; from his replies it was obvious that he was trying to make up his mind whether it was necessary for him to occupy his mind with Feuerbach, or whether he could dispense with him. Berséneff then turned the conversation on his work, and asked Insároff to show him some of it. Insároff read to him his translation of two or three Bulgarian ballads, and expressed a desire to know his opinion. Berséneff thought the translation accurate, but not sufficiently vivacious. Insároff took his remark under consideration. From the ballads, Berséneff passed to the contemporary situation of Bulgaria, and here, for the first time, he observed what Insároff underwent at the mere mention of his native land: it was not that his face flushed hotly, or that his voice was raised—no! but his whole being seemed to gather strength and strain onward, the outlines of his lips became more clearly and more pitilessly defined, and in the depths of his eyes some sort of a dull, unquenchable fire kindled. Insároff was not fond of dilating upon his own trip to his native land, but about Bulgaria in general he talked willingly with every one; he talked, without haste,

about the Turks, about their oppressions, about the woes and calamities of his fellow-countrymen, about their hopes; the concentrated deliberation of a sole and long-existing passion was audible in his every word.

"I 'm afraid that Turkish Aga paid his debt to him for the death of his mother and father," —Berséneff was thinking in the meantime.

Before Insároff had ceased speaking, the door opened, and Shúbin made his appearance on the threshold.

He entered the room in a rather too free-and-easy, good-natured way; Berséneff, who knew him well, immediately comprehended that something had stirred him up.

"I will introduce myself without ceremony," —he began, with a bright and frank expression of countenance:—"my name is Shúbin; I am a friend of this young man here." (He pointed at Berséneff.) "You are Mr. Insároff, I think, are you not?"

"I am Insároff."

"Then give me your hand, and let us make acquaintance. I do not know whether Berséneff has talked to you about me, but he has talked to me about you. You have taken up your abode here? Capital! Don't be angry with me for staring intently at you. I am a sculptor by profession, and I foresee that before long I shall ask your permission to model your head."

"My head is at your service,"—said Insároff.

"What are we doing to-day, hey?"—said Shúbin, suddenly seating himself on a low stool, with both arms propped upon his widely-parted knees.—"Andréi Petróvitch, has Your Well-born any plan for the present day? The weather is glorious; it is so redolent of hay and dry strawberries . . . . that it is as though one were drinking herb tea. We ought to get up some sort of jollification. Let 's show the new resident of Kúntzovo all its numerous beauties. ("He is stirred up," Berséneff continued to think to himself.) "Come, why art thou silent, my friend Horatio? Open thy wise lips. Shall we get up some sort of an affair, or not?"

"I don't know,"—remarked Berséneff:—"that 's as Insároff says. I think he is preparing to work."

Shúbin wheeled round on his stool.

"Do you want to work?"—he asked, somewhat through his nose.

"No,"—replied Insároff;—"I can devote to-day to a stroll."

"Ah!"—ejaculated Shúbin.—"Well, that 's fine. Come along, my friend Andréi Petróvitch, cover your wise head with a hat, and let us walk straight ahead, whithersoever our eyes gaze. Our eyes are young—they see far. I know of a very bad little eating-house, where they will give us a

very nasty little dinner; and we shall be very jolly. Come along."

Half an hour later, all three of them were strolling along the shore of the Moscow River. It appeared that Insároff had a decidedly queer, long-eared cap, over which Shúbin went into not entirely natural ecstasies. Insároff strode along at a leisurely pace, gazed about him, breathed the air, talked and smiled composedly: but he had consecrated that day to pleasure, and was enjoying himself to the full.

" That 's the way good little boys walk on Sundays," whispered Shúbin in Berséneff's ear. Shúbin himself cut up all sorts of capers, ran on ahead, assumed the poses of famous statues, turned somersaults on the grass; Insároff's composure did not exactly irritate him, but it made him play antics. " What makes thee grimace so, Frenchman!" Berséneff remarked to him a couple of times. " Yes, I am a Frenchman,— half a Frenchman,"—Shúbin retorted; " but do thou keep the mean between jest and seriousness, as a certain waiter used to say to me." The young men turned away from the river, and walked along a deep, narrow gully, between two walls of tall, golden rye; a bluish shadow fell upon them from one of these walls; the radiant sun seemed to glide across the crests of the ears; the larks were singing, the quails were calling; everywhere

about the grass grew green; a warm breeze fluttered and raised its blades, and rocked the heads of the flowers. After prolonged ramblings, rests, and chat—(Shúbin even tried to play at leap-frog with a toothless, wretched passing peasant, who laughed incessantly, whatever the gentlemen did to him)—the young men arrived at the "very bad little" eating-house. The servant almost upset each one of them, and actually did feed them with a very nasty dinner, with some sort of wine from beyond the Balkans, all which, however, did not prevent their heartily enjoying themselves, as Shúbin had predicted that they would; he himself was the most noisily merry—and the least merry of them all. He drank the health of the incomprehensible but great Venélin, the health of the Bulgarian King Krum, Khrum, or Khrom, who lived about the time of Adam.

"In the ninth century,"—Insároff corrected him.

"In the ninth century?"—exclaimed Shúbin. —"Oh, what bliss!"

Berséneff remarked that, in the midst of all his antics, sallies, and jests, Shúbin seemed to be constantly examining Insároff,—kept sounding him, as it were,—and was the prey of inward agitation,—while Insároff remained calm and clear as before.

At last they returned home, changed their clothes, and, in order not to spoil the programme which they had adopted in the morning, they decided to betake themselves that same evening to the Stákhoff's. Shúbin ran on ahead to give notice of their coming.

XII

"The *Hero* Insároff will deign to come hither in a moment!" he exclaimed triumphantly, as he entered the drawing-room of the Stákhoffs, where, at that moment, there was no one but Eléna and Zóya.

"*Wer?*"—asked Zóya in German. When taken by surprise, she always expressed herself in her native tongue. Eléna drew herself up. Shúbin glanced at her with a playful smile on his lips. She was vexed, but said nothing.

"You have heard,"—he repeated:—"Mr. Insároff is coming hither."

"I have heard,"—she replied,—"and I have heard what you called him. I am amazed at you, I really am. Mr. Insároff has not yet set his foot here, and you already consider it necessary to make wry faces."

Shúbin suddenly relaxed.

"You are right, you are always right, Eléna Nikoláevna:—but I did n't mean it, God is my witness that I did not. We have been strolling together all day, and he is an excellent man, I assure you."

"I did not ask you about that,"—said Eléna, rising from her seat.

"Is Mr. Insároff young?"—inquired Zóya.

"He is one hundred and forty-four years old," answered Shúbin, with vexation.

The page announced the arrival of the two friends. Berséneff introduced Insároff. Eléna asked them to be seated, and sat down herself, but Zóya went away up-stairs: Anna Vasílievna must be informed. A conversation began,—rather insignificant, like all first conversations. Shúbin kept silent watch from a corner, but there was nothing to watch. In Eléna he observed the traces of repressed vexation with himself, Shúbin,—and that was all. He glanced at Berséneff and at Insároff, and, as a sculptor, he compared their faces. Neither of them was handsome, he thought: the Bulgarian had a face full of character, a sculpturesque face; it was well illuminated now; the Great Russian demands rather painting: he has no lines, but he has physiognomy. But, probably, one might fall in love with the latter as well as with the former. She was not in love yet, but she would fall in love with Berséneff, he decided in his own mind.—Anna Vasílievna made her appearance in the drawing-room, and the conversation took a turn completely of the summer-villa order,—precisely that, the villa order, not the country order. It was a very varied conversation in the matter of the abundance of the subjects discussed; but brief, tiresome pauses broke it

off every three minutes. In one of these pauses, Anna Vasílievna turned to Zóya. Shúbin understood her mute hint, and made a wry face, but Zóya seated herself at the piano and played and sang all her little pieces. Uvár Ivánovitch showed himself for a moment in the doorway, but wiggled his fingers and retreated. Then tea was served, and the whole party went into the garden. . . It had grown dark out of doors, and the guests went away.

Insároff had really made less of an impression on Eléna than she herself had expected; or, to speak more accurately, his straightforwardness and unconstrainedness had pleased her,—and his face had pleased her. But Insároff's whole being, composedly firm, and simple in an everyday way, somehow did not accord with the image which she had formed in her own mind from Berséneff's accounts. Eléna, without herself suspecting it, had expected something "more fatal." But, thought she, he said very little today; I myself am to blame: I did not question him, I will wait until the next time . . . . but his eyes are expressive, honest eyes. She felt that she did not wish to bow down before him and give him a friendly hand, and she was surprised: not thus had she pictured to herself people, like Insároff, who were "heroes." This last word reminded her of Shúbin, and she flushed up and waxed indignant, as she lay in her bed.

"How do you like your new acquaintances?" Berséneff asked Insároff on their way home.

"I like them very much,"—replied Insároff,—"especially the daughter. She must be a splendid girl. She gets agitated, but in her case it must be a good agitation."

"We must go to them as often as we can,"—remarked Berséneff.

"Yes, we must,"—said Insároff—and said nothing more the whole way home. He immediately locked himself up in his room, but his candle burned until long after midnight.

Before Berséneff had succeeded in reading a page of Raumer, a handful of fine gravel was flung and rattled against the panes of his window. He involuntarily started, opened the window, and espied Shúbin, pale as a sheet.

"What a turbulent fellow thou art! thou night-moth!" began Berséneff.

"Hush!" Shúbin interrupted him:—"I have come to thee by stealth, as Max did to Agatha. It is imperatively necessary that I should say a few words to thee in private."

"Then come into the room."

"No, that is unnecessary,"—replied Shúbin, leaning his elbows on the window-sill:—"it 's jollier this way, more like Spain. In the first place, I congratulate thee; thy stocks have gone up. Thy vaunted, remarkable man has been a dead failure. I can vouch for that. And,

in order to demonstrate to thee my disinterestedness, listen: here 's a formal inventory of Mr. Insároff: Talents, none; poetry, has n't any; capacity for work, an immense amount; memory, a great deal; mind, neither varied nor profound, but healthy and lively, aridity and power, and even a gift of language, when the subject is his —between ourselves be it said—most deadly tiresome Bulgaria. What? thou wilt say, I am unjust? One more remark: thou wilt never be on terms of calling him *thou,* and no one ever has called him *thou;* I, as an artist, am repulsive to him, a fact of which I am proud. He 's dry, dry, and he can grind all of you to powder. He is bound up with his land—not like our empty vessels, who fawn on the people; as much as to say: ' Flow into us, thou living water! ' On the other hand, his problem is easier, more readily understood: all it amounts to is, to turn out the Turks, and a great matter that is! But all these qualities, thank God, do not please women. There's no fascination, *charme;* nothing of that which thou and I possess."

" Why dost thou implicate me in this? "—muttered Berséneff.—" And thou art not right as to the rest: thou art not in the least repulsive to him, and he is on the footing of *thou* with his fellow-countrymen, ... that I know."

" That is another matter! For them he is a hero; but I must say that my conception of

heroes is different: a hero ought not to know how to talk—a hero bellows like a bull; on the other hand, when he moves his horns the walls tumble down. And he himself ought not to know why he moves, yet he does move. However, perhaps heroes of another calibre are required in our times."

"Why does Insároff occupy thy mind so much?"—inquired Berséneff.—"Is it possible that thou hast run hither merely for the purpose of describing his character to me?"

"I came hither,"—began Shúbin,—"because I was very sad at home."

"Not really! Dost not thou wish to weep again?"

"Laugh away! I came hither because I am ready to bite my own elbows, because despair is gnawing me—vexation, jealousy . . . . ."

"Jealousy!—of whom?"

"Of thee, of him, of everybody. I am tormented by the thought that if I had understood her earlier, if I had set about the business intelligently . . . . But what 's the use of talking! It will end in my constantly laughing, fooling, playing antics, as she says, and then I shall take and strangle myself."

"Well, as for strangling thyself, thou wilt not,"—remarked Berséneff.

"On such a night, of course not; but only let us live until the autumn. On such a night as this

people die also, but it is from happiness. Akh, happiness! Every shadow stretched out athwart the road from the trees seems to be whispering, now: 'I know where happiness is. . . . Wilt thou have me tell thee?' I would invite thee to a stroll, but thou art now under the influence of prose. Sleep, and mayest thou dream of mathematical figures! But my soul is bursting. You, gentlemen, behold a man laugh, and that signifies, according to you, that he is at ease; you can prove to him that he is contradicting himself, which means that he is not suffering. . . Begone with you!"

Shúbin swiftly withdrew from the window. "Ánnushka!" Berséneff felt like shouting after him, but he restrained himself; in fact, Shúbin looked unlike his natural self. A couple of minutes later, Berséneff even fancied that he heard sobs; he rose, and opened the window; everything was quiet, only somewhere, in the distance, some one—probably a passing peasant—struck up "The Mozdok Steppe."

XIII

In the course of the first two weeks after Insároff's removal to the neighbourhood of Kúntzovo, he did not visit the Stákhoffs more than four or five times; Berséneff went to them every other day. Eléna was always glad to see him, a lively and interesting conversation always arose between him and her, but, nevertheless, he frequently returned home with a melancholy countenance. Shúbin scarcely showed himself; he busied himself with his art, with feverish activity: he either sat behind locked doors in his chamber and rushed thence in his blouse, all smeared with clay, or spent days in Moscow, where he had a studio, whither came to him models and Italian model-makers, his friends and teachers. Eléna never once talked with Insároff as she would have liked to talk; in his absence, she prepared herself to question him about many things, but when he came she felt ashamed of her preparations. Insároff's very composure daunted her: it seemed to her that she had no right to make him express his opinions, and she resolved to wait; withal she felt that with every visit of his, however insignificant were

the words which were exchanged between them, he attracted her more and more: but she had not happened to be left alone with him,—and in order to get close to a person it is necessary to have at least one private conversation with him. She talked a great deal about him to Berséneff. Berséneff understood that Eléna's imagination had been struck by Insároff, and rejoiced that his friend had not proved a failure, as Shúbin had asserted; he narrated to her, with fervour, everything he knew about him, down to the very smallest details (we frequently, when we wish to please a person ourselves, extol our friends in conversation with him, almost never suspecting, moreover, that by that very fact we extol ourselves), and only now and then, when Eléna's pale cheeks flushed slightly, and her eyes began to beam and open widely, did that noxious sadness, which he had already experienced, grip his heart.

One day Berséneff went to the Stákhoffs at eleven in the morning, an unusual hour for him. Eléna came to the drawing-room to receive him.

"Just imagine,"—he began with a forced smile:—"our Insároff has disappeared."

"Disappeared?" said Eléna.

"Yes, disappeared. Day before yesterday, in the evening, he went off somewhere, and since then there has been no sign of him."

"Did not he tell you where he was going?"

"No."

Eléna sank down on a chair.

"Probably he went to Moscow,"—she remarked, striving to appear indifferent, and, at the same time, surprised that she was striving to appear indifferent.

"I do not think so,"—returned Berséneff.—"He did not go away alone."

"With whom, then?"

"Two men, who must have been fellow-countrymen of his, came to him the day before yesterday."

"Bulgarians? Why do you think that?"

"Because, so far as I was able to overhear them, they were talking with him in a language which was unknown to me, yet was Slavonic. . . . . Now you, Eléna Nikoláevna, have always thought that there was very little that was mysterious about Insároff: what could be more mysterious than this visit? Imagine: they entered his room—and began to shout and quarrel, and so savagely, so viciously. . . And he shouted also."

"He also?"

"He also. He shouted at them. They seemed to be complaining of each other. And if you could but have seen those visitors! Swarthy, dull faces, with broad cheek-bones and aquiline noses, each of them over forty years of age, badly dressed, dusty, sweaty, with the aspect of ar-

tisans—neither artisans nor gentlemen. . . God knows what sort of men."

"And he went away with them?"

"Yes. He fed them, and went off with them. My landlady said that, between the two, they devoured a huge pot of buckwheat groats. She says they vied with each other in gulping it down, just like wolves."

Eléna gave a faint laugh.

"You will see,"—she said:—"all this will turn out in some very prosaic manner."

"God grant it! Only, you are wrong to use that word. There is nothing prosaic about Insároff, although Shúbin declares . . . ."

"Shúbin!"—interrupted Eléna, and shrugged her shoulders.—"But admit that those two gentlemen who gulped down the groats . . . . ."

"Themistocles also ate on the eve of the battle of Salamis,"—remarked Berséneff, with a smile.

"Exactly so: but, on the other hand, the battle took place on the following day."

"But you must let me know when he returns,"—added Eléna, and tried to change the conversation,—but the conversation languished. Zóya made her appearance, and began to walk about the room on tiptoe, thereby giving it to be understood that Anna Vasílievna had not yet waked up.

Berséneff took his departure.

On that same day, in the evening, a note was brought from him to Eléna. "He has returned," —he wrote to her:—"sunburned, and dusty to the very eyebrows; but why and whither he went, I do not know; cannot you find out?"

"'Cannot you find out!'"—whispered Eléna. —"Does he talk with me?"

XIV

About two o'clock on the following day, Eléna was standing in the garden, in front of a small kennel, where she was rearing two watch-dog pups. (The gardener had found them abandoned under the hedge, and had brought them to his young mistress, concerning whom the laundresses had told him that she had compassion on all wild beasts and animals.) She glanced into the kennel, convinced herself that the puppies were alive and well and that they had been littered down with fresh straw, turned around, and almost shrieked aloud: directly in front of her, alone, Insároff was walking up the alley.

"Good morning,"—he said, approaching her, and removing his cap. She noticed that he had, in fact, grown very sunburned during the last three days.—"I wanted to come hither with Andréi Petróvitch, but he lingered for some reason or other; so I set out without him. There was no one at your house,—everybody is asleep or out walking,—so I came hither."

"You seem to be apologising,"—replied Eléna.—"That is entirely unnecessary. We are

all very glad to see you. . . . Let us sit down on that bench yonder, in the shade."

She seated herself. Insároff sat down beside her.

"You have not been at home of late, I believe?"—she began.

"No,"—he replied: "I went away. . . . Did Andréi Petróvitch tell you?"

Insároff glanced at her, smiled, and began to play with his cap. When he smiled, he winked his eyes swiftly and thrust out his lips, which imparted to him a very good-natured aspect.

"Andréi Petróvitch, probably, told you also that I had gone off with some . . . horrible people,"—he went on, continuing to smile.

Eléna was somewhat disconcerted, but immediately felt that it was necessary always to speak the truth to Insároff.

"Yes," she said, with decision.

"What did you think of me?"—he suddenly asked her.

Eléna raised her eyes to his.

"I thought,"—she said . . . . "I thought that you always know what you are doing, and that you are not capable of doing anything bad."

"Well, I thank you for that. See here, Eléna Nikoláevna,"—he began, moving closer to her, in a confidential sort of way:—"there is only a small family of us here; among us there are people who are not highly educated; but all

are firmly devoted to the general cause. Unhappily, quarrels cannot be avoided, and all know me, trust me; so they called on me to arbitrate in a quarrel. I went."

"Was it far from here?"

"I went more than sixty versts, to the Troitzky suburb.[1] There, at the monastery, there are also some of our people. At all events, I did not have my trouble for nothing: I arranged the matter."

"And did you find it difficult?"

"Yes. One persisted in being stubborn. He would not give up the money."

"What? Was the quarrel about money?"

"Yes; and not a large amount, either. But what did you suppose it was?"

"And for such a trifle you travelled sixty versts—you wasted three days?"

"It is not a trifle, Eléna Nikoláevna, when one's fellow-countrymen are concerned. To refuse in such a case, would be a sin. Here, I perceive that you do not refuse your aid even to puppies, and for that I laud you. And as for my having wasted time, that is of no consequence. I will make it up later on. Our time does not belong to us."

"To whom, then?"

"To every one who needs us. I have told you

[1] The Trinity—Sergyéi Monastery, forty miles from Moscow.—Translator.

all this without circumlocution, because I value your opinion. I can imagine how Andréi Petróvitch amazed you!"

"You value my opinion,"—said Eléna in a low tone:—"why?"

Again Insároff smiled.

"Because you are a nice young lady, not an aristocrat . . . that 's all."

A brief silence ensued.

"Dmítry Nikanórovitch,"—said Eléna: "do you know that this is the first time you have been so frank with me?"

"How so? It strikes me, that I have always told you everything I thought."

"No; this is the first time, and I am very glad of it,—and I, also, wish to be frank with you. May I?"

Insároff laughed and said:

"You may."

"I warn you, that I am very curious."

"Never mind, speak on."

"Andréi Petróvitch has told me a great deal about your life, about your youth. I know one circumstance, one frightful circumstance. . . . I know that, afterward, you went home to your fatherland. . . . Do not answer me, for God's sake, if my question appears to you to be indiscreet,—but one thought tortures me. . . . Tell me, did you meet that man . . . . ."

Eléna's breath failed her. Her daring both

mortified and terrified her. Insároff gazed intently at her, narrowing his eyes slightly, and touching his chin with his fingers.

"Eléna Nikoláevna,"—he began, at last, and his voice was softer than usual, which almost frightened Eléna:—"I understand what man you just referred to. No, I did not meet him, and God be thanked for that! I did not seek him. I did not seek him because I did not consider that I had a right to kill him,—I would have killed him quite calmly,—but it was not a case for private vengeance, when it is a question of national, general vengeance . . . . or no, that is not the proper word . . . when it is a question of the emancipation of a nation. The one would have interfered with the other. In its own good time, that will not escape, either. . . . . That will not escape, either,"—he repeated—and shook his head.

Eléna cast a sidelong glance at him.

"You love your native land greatly?" she articulated timidly.

"That is not settled, as yet,"—he replied.—"You see, when some one of us shall die for her, then it may be said that he loved her."

"So that, if you should be deprived of the possibility of returning to Bulgaria,"—went on Eléna:—"you would be very unhappy in Russia?"

Insároff dropped his eyes.

"It seems to me that I should not survive that,"—he said.

"Tell me,"—began Eléna again:—"is the Bulgarian language difficult to learn?"

"Not at all. A Russian ought to be ashamed not to know Bulgarian. A Russian ought to know all the Slavonic dialects. Would you like to have me bring you some Bulgarian books? You will see how easy it is. What ballads we have! As good as the Servian. And, stay, I will translate one of them for you. . . . Do you know anything at all about our history?"

"No, I know nothing,"—replied Eléna.

"Wait, I will bring you a book. You will see the principal facts, at least, in it. Now listen to the ballad. . . However, I had better bring you a written translation. I am convinced that you will like us. If you only knew what a blessed land is ours! Yet they trample it under foot, they torture it,"—he added, with an involuntary gesture of his hands, and his face darkened:—"they have taken from us everything, everything: our churches, our rights, our lands; the accursed Turks drive us like a flock, they cut our throats. . . . ."

"Dmítry Nikanórovitch!" exclaimed Eléna.

He paused.

"Forgive me. I cannot speak of it with indifference. You just asked me, whether I loved my native land? What else on earth can one

love? What alone is unchangeable, what is above all suspicion, what else is it impossible not to believe in, except God? And when that fatherland needs thee . . . . Observe: the humblest peasant in Bulgaria and I,—we desire one and the same thing. We have but one aim, all of us. You must understand what confidence and strength that gives!"

Insároff paused for a moment, and again began to talk about Bulgaria. Eléna listened to him with devouring, profound, and melancholy attention. When he had finished, she asked him once more:

"So, you would not remain in Russia, on any terms?" . . .

And when he went away, she gazed long after him. He had become for her a different man that day. The man to whom she bade farewell was not the same man whom she had greeted two hours before.

From that day forth, he began to come more and more frequently, and Berséneff came more and more rarely. Between the two friends a strange something had established itself of which both were plainly conscious, but which they could not name, and were afraid to explain. A month passed in this manner.

XV

Anna Vasílievna was fond of staying at home, as the reader is already aware: but sometimes, quite unexpectedly, she manifested an unconquerable desire for something out of the ordinary, some wonderful *partie de plaisir;* and the more difficult was this *partie de plaisir,* the more preparations and preliminary arrangements did it require, the more excited did Anna Vasílievna become, the more agreeable was it to her. If that *mood* descended upon her in the winter, she ordered that two or three adjoining boxes should be engaged, assembled all her acquaintances, and went to the theatre, or even to a masquerade; in the summer, she went somewhere out of town, the farther the better. On the following day, she complained of headache, groaned, and did not get out of her bed, and a couple of months afterward, the thirst for the "out of the ordinary" was again kindled within her. So it happened now. Some one referred, in her presence, to the beauties of Tzarítzyno,[1] and Anna Vasí-

[1] A village twelve miles from Moscow, with an unfinished palace, begun by Katherine II., and a park. To reach it from Kúntzovo, six miles from town), involves traversing the whole breadth of Moscow. —Translator.

lievna suddenly announced that she intended to go to Tzarítzyno on the next day but one. The house was in an uproar; a special messenger sped to Moscow for Nikolái Artémievitch; with him also hastened the butler to purchase wine, pasties, and all sorts of edibles; Shúbin was commanded to engage a calash and postilion (the carriage alone was insufficient), and to arrange for relays of horses; the page ran twice to Berséneff and Insároff, and carried them two notes of invitation, written first in Russian, then in French, by Zóya; Anna Vasílievna busied herself with the travelling toilets of the young ladies. In the meantime, the *partie de plaisir* came near being upset: Nikolái Artémievitch arrived from Moscow in a sour and ill-disposed, rebellious frame of mind (he was still in the sulks at Augustína Christiánovna) ; and on learning what was on hand, he announced, with decision, that he would not go;—that to rush from Kúntzovo to Moscow, and from Moscow to Tzarítzyno, and from Tzarítzyno to Moscow, and from Moscow back to Kúntzovo, was folly; and, in short, he added, "Let it first be proved to me, that any one spot on the earth's surface can be any jollier than any other spot, then I will go." Of course, no one could prove this to him, and Anna Vasílievna, in the absence of any sedate cavalier, was on the point of renouncing her *partie de plaisir,* when she remembered Uvár

Ivánovitch, and in her distress she sent to his room for him, saying: "A drowning man clutches at a straw." They waked him up; he went down-stairs, listened in silence to Anna Vasílievna's proposal, twiddled his fingers, and, to the general surprise, consented. Anna Vasílievna kissed him on the cheek, and called him a darling; Nikolái Artémievitch smiled scornfully, and said, "*Quelle bourde!*" (he was fond, on occasion, of using "chic" French words); and, on the following morning, at seven o'clock, the carriage and the calash, loaded to the brim, rolled out of the yard of the Stákhoffs' villa. In the carriage sat the ladies, the maid, and Berséneff; Insároff installed himself on the box; and in the calash were Uvár Ivánovitch and Shúbin. Uvár Ivánovitch himself, by a movement of his fingers, had summoned Shúbin to him; he knew that the latter would tease him the whole way, but between the "black earth force" and the young artist there existed a certain strange bond and a bickering frankness. On this occasion, however, Shúbin left his fat friend in peace: he was taciturn, abstracted, and gentle.

The sun already stood high in the cloudless azure when the carriages drove up to the ruins of the castle of Tzarítzyno, gloomy and forbidding even at noon-day. The whole company alighted on the grass, and immediately moved on to the park. In front walked Eléna and

Zóya with Insároff; behind them, with an expression of complete bliss on her face, trod Anna Vasílievna, arm in arm with Uvár Ivánovitch. He panted and waddled, his new straw hat sawed his forehead, and his feet burned in his boots, but he was enjoying himself. Shúbin and Berséneff closed the procession. "We will be in the reserves, my dear fellow, like certain veterans," Shúbin whispered to Berséneff. "Bulgaria is there now," he added, indicating Eléna with a movement of his brows.

The weather was glorious. Everything round about was blooming, humming and singing; in the distance gleamed the water of the ponds; a light, festive feeling took possession of the soul.—"Akh, how nice! akh, how nice!"—Anna Vasílievna kept incessantly repeating; Uvár Ivánovitch nodded his head approvingly, and once he even remarked: "What 's the use of talking!" Eléna exchanged words with Insároff from time to time; Zóya held the broad brim of her hat with two fingers, thrust her tiny feet, clad in light-grey boots with blunt toes, coquettishly from beneath her rose-coloured barège gown, and peered now to one side, now behind her. "Oho!" suddenly exclaimed Shúbin, in a low tone: "Zóya Nikítishna is looking back, I do believe. I 'll go to her. Eléna Nikoláevna despises me now, but she respects thee, Andréi Petróvitch, which amounts to the same thing.

I 'll go; I 've been sulking long enough. But I advise thee, my friend, to botanise: in thy position, that is the best thing thou canst devise; and it is useful from a scientific point of view also. Good-bye!" Shúbin hastened to Zóya, crooked his arm, saying, *"Ihre Hand, Madame,"* took her arm, and marched on ahead with her. Eléna halted, summoned Berséneff, and took his arm, but continued to chat with Insároff. She asked him, what were the words in his language for lily of the valley, ash, oak, linden . . . . ("Bulgaria!" thought poor Andréi Petróvitch.)

All at once, a shriek rang out in front; all raised their heads. Shúbin's cigar-case flew into a bush, flung by the hand of Zóya. "Wait, I 'll pay you off for that!" he exclaimed, dived into the bush, found his cigar-case, and was about to return to Zóya; but no sooner had he approached her, than again his cigar-case flew across the path! Five times this performance was repeated, he laughing and menacing all the while; but Zóya only smiled quietly, and writhed like a kitten. At last he grasped her fingers, and squeezed them so that she squealed and for a long time afterward blew on her hand, pretending to be angry, while he hummed something in her ear.

"Rogues, the young folks," remarked Anna Vasílievna merrily to Uvár Ivánovitch.

The latter twiddled his fingers.

"What a girl Zóya Nikítishna is!"—Berséneff said to Eléna.

"And Shúbin?"—she replied.

Meanwhile, the whole party had reached the arbour, known by the name of the Pretty Arbour, and halted to admire the view of the Tzarítzyno ponds. They stretched out, one beyond the other, for several vérsts; the dense forest lay dark beyond them. The grass which covered the entire slope of the hill to the principal pond imparted to the water itself a remarkably-brilliant emerald hue. Nowhere, even on the shore, was there a wave swelling or foam gleaming white; not even a ripple flitted over the even surface. It seemed as though a mass of chilled glass had spread itself out in a huge font, and the sky had descended to its bottom, and the undulating trees were gazing immovably at themselves in its transparent bosom. All admired the view long and in silence; even Shúbin subsided, even Zóya grew pensive. At last, all were unanimously seized with a desire to go upon the water. Shúbin, Insároff, and Berséneff ran a race with one another on the grass. They hunted up a big, gaily-painted boat, found a couple of oarsmen, and called the ladies. The ladies descended to them; Uvár Ivánovitch cautiously went down after them. While he was entering the boat, and seating himself, there was a great deal of laugh-

ter. "Look out, master! Don't drown us!" remarked one of the rowers, a snub-nosed young fellow, in a sprigged calico shirt.—"Come, come, you windbags!" said Uvár Ivánovitch. The boat pushed off. The young men tried to take the oars, but only one of them—Insároff—knew how to row. Shúbin suggested that they sing in chorus some Russian song, and himself started up: "Adown dear Mother Volga . . . ." Berséneff, Zóya, and even Anna Vasílievna joined in (Insároff did not know how to sing); but a discord ensued in the third verse, the singers got into confusion and Berséneff alone tried to continue in his bass voice: "Naught in her waves can be seen,"—but he, also, speedily became disconcerted. The rowers exchanged winks, and grinned in silence.—"Well?"—Shúbin turned to them,—"evidently, the ladies and gentlemen cannot sing?"—The young fellow in the sprigged calico shirt merely shook his head.—"Just wait then, Snub-nose,"—retorted Shúbin. "We 'll show you. Zóya Nikítishna, sing us 'Le Lac,' by Niedermeyer. Don't row, you!"—The wet oars were elevated in the air, like wings, and there remained motionless, sonorously trickling drops; the boat floated on a little further, and came to a standstill, barely circling on the water, like a swan. Zóya affected airs. *"Allons!"* said Anna Vasílievna caressingly. . . . . Zóya flung aside her hat, and began to

sing: "*O lac, l'année à peine a fini sa carrière . . . .*"

Her small but clear little voice fairly hurtled across the mirror-like surface of the pond; far away, in the forest, every word was re-echoed; it seemed as though some one there were singing also, in a voice which was distinct and mysterious, but not human or of this world. When Zóya had finished, a thunderous bravo rang out from one of the arbours on the shore, and from it rushed forth several red-faced Germans, who had come to Tzarítzyno to have a carouse. Several of them were coatless, minus cravats, and even minus waistcoats, and they roared, "Bis!" so violently, that Anna Vasílievna gave orders to row to the other end of the pond as quickly as possible. But, before the boat reached the shore, Uvár Ivánovitch had managed to astonish his acquaintances again: observing that, at one spot of the forest, the echo repeated every sound with particular distinctness, he suddenly began to call like a quail. At first all started, but immediately they experienced genuine pleasure, the more so as Uvár Ivánovitch gave the call with great fidelity and lifelikeness. This encouraged him, and he tried to mew like a cat; but his mewing did not turn out so successful; he called once more like a quail, looked at them all, and relapsed into silence. Shúbin rushed to kiss him: he repulsed him. At that moment the boat

made its landing, and the whole party got out on the shore. In the meanwhile, the coachman, aided by the footman and the maid, had brought the baskets from the carriage, and prepared the dinner on the grass, beneath the aged linden-trees. All seated themselves around the out-spread table-cloth, and began on the pasties and other viands. All had an excellent appetite, and Anna Vasílievna kept constantly offering things to her guests, and urging them to eat more, asserting that this was very healthful in the open air; she addressed such remarks even to Uvár Ivánovitch.—"Be easy!" he bellowed at her, with his mouth crammed full. "The Lord has given such a splendid day!" she kept incessantly repeating. It was impossible to stop her: she seemed to have grown twenty years younger. "Yes, yes," she said; "I was very comely, in my time, also; they would n't have rejected me from the first ten, as to looks."—Shúbin joined Zóya, and kept constantly pouring wine for her; she refused, he urged her, and it ended in his drinking a glass himself, then urging her to drink again; he also assured her that he wanted to lay his head on her knees: she would not, on any terms, permit him "so great a familiarity." Eléna seemed more serious than all the rest, but in her heart there was a wondrous calm, such as she had not experienced for a long time. She felt herself infinitely amiable, and constantly

wished to have by her side not only Insároff but also Berséneff. . . . . Andréi Petróvitch dimly apprehended what this meant, and sighed by stealth.

The hours flew past; evening drew on. Anna Vasílievna suddenly started up in affright.—"Akh, good heavens, how late it is!"—she said. "We have had a good time, but all good things must come to an end." She began to fidget, and all began to fidget about, rose to their feet, and walked in the direction of the castle, where the equipages were. As they passed the ponds, all halted to admire Tzarítzyno for the last time. Everywhere flamed the brilliant hues which precede evening: the sky was crimson, the foliage gleamed with flitting sparks, agitated by the rising breeze; the distant waters flowed on, touched with gold; the reddish towers and arbours, scattered here and there about the park, stood out sharply against the dark green. "Farewell, Tzarítzyno, we shall not forget our trip of to-day!" said Anna Vasílievna. . . . But at that moment, as though in confirmation of her last words, a strange event occurred, which really was not so easily forgotten.

Namely: Anna Vasílievna had not finished wafting her farewell greeting to Tzarítzyno, when suddenly, a few paces from her, behind a tall bush of lilacs, there rang out discordant exclamations, laughter and shouts—and a whole

horde of dishevelled men, the very same admirers of singing who had so vigorously applauded Zóya, poured out on the path. The admirers of singing appeared to be very drunk. They halted at sight of the ladies; but one of them, of huge stature, with a bull neck, and inflamed eyes like a bull's, separated himself from his companions, and, bowing clumsily and reeling as he walked, approached Anna Vasílievna, who was petrified with fright.

"*Bon jour, madame,*"—he said, in a mighty voice,—"how is your health?"

Anna Vasílievna staggered backward.

"And why,"—pursued the giant, in bad Russian,—"were not you willing to sing *bis* when our company shouted, 'bis,' and 'bravo'?"

"Yes, yes, why?"—rang out in the ranks of the company.

Insároff was on the point of stepping forward, but Shúbin stopped him, and himself went to Anna Vasílievna's rescue.

"Allow me,"—he began,—"respected stranger, to express to you the unfeigned amazement into which you have thrown us all by your behaviour. So far as I can judge, you belong to the Saxon branch of the Caucasian race; consequently, we are bound to assume in you a knowledge of the social decencies, and yet you are addressing a lady to whom you have not been introduced. At any other time, believe me, I would

be particularly glad to make closer acquaintance with you; for I observe in you such a phenomenal development of muscles,—biceps, triceps, and deltoidæus,—that, as a sculptor, I would regard it as a genuine pleasure to have you for a nude model; but, on the present occasion, leave us in peace."

The " respected stranger " listened to the whole of Shúbin's speech, scornfully twisted his head on one side, and stuck his arms akimbo.

" I understands nodings vat you say to me," he said at last.—" You dinks, perhaps, dat I am a master shoemaker or vatchmaker? Eh! I am officer, I am official, yes."

" I have no doubt of that,"—began Shúbin . . . .

" And dis is vat I says,"—went on the stranger, brushing him off the path like a branch with his powerful hand,—" I says: vy did n't you sing *bis* when we shouted, ' Bis '? And now I am going avay, immediately, dis very minute, only, dis is vat is necessary, dat dis fräulein, not dis madam, dat is not necessary, but dis vun, or dis vun " (he pointed at Eléna and Zóya), " should give me *einen Kuss,* as we say in German, a kees, yes; vat of dat? it is noding."

" Nothing, it is nothing," rang out again in the ranks of the company.—*" Ih! der Stakramenter!"* said one German, who was already roisterously drunk, choking with laughter.

Zóya clutched at Insároff's arm, but he tore himself free from her, and placed himself directly in front of the insolent giant.

"Please go away,"—he said to him in a low but sharp voice.

The German laughed ponderously.—"Vat you mean by avay? I like dat! Can't I valk here also? Vat you mean by avay? Vy avay?"

"Because you have dared to disturb a lady," —said Insároff, and suddenly paled,—"because you are drunk."

"Vat? I am drunk? Do you hear? *Hören Sie das, Herr Provisor?* I 'm an officer, and he dares . . . Now I shall demand *Satisfaction! Einen Kuss will ich!*"

"If you take another step,"—began Insároff . . . . .

"Vell? And vat den?"

"I will throw you into the water."

"Into de vater? *Herr Je!* Is dat all? Come, let 's see, it 's very curious, how you 'll throw me into de vater. . . ."

The officer raised his arms, and started forward, but suddenly something remarkable happened: he gave a groan, his whole huge body swayed, rose from the ground, his legs kicked in the air, and before the ladies had time to shriek, before any one could understand how the thing was done, the *officer,* with his whole mass, splashed

heavily in the pond, and immediately disappeared beneath the swirling water.

"Akh!" screamed the ladies in unison.

"*Mein Gott!*" was audible from the other side.

A minute elapsed . . . and the round head, all plastered with damp hair, made its appearance above the water; it emitted bubbles, that head; two arms gesticulated convulsively at its very lips. . . .

"He will drown, save him, save him!" Anna Vasílievna shrieked to Insároff, who was standing on the shore, his legs planted far apart, and panting.

"He 'll swim out," he said, with scornful and pitiless indifference.—"Let us go,"—he added, offering Anna Vasílievna his arm,—"come along, Uvár Ivánovitch, Eléna Nikoláevna."

"A . . . a . . . . o . . . . o . . ." at that moment resounded the yell of the unlucky German, who had contrived to grasp the shore reeds.

All moved on after Insároff, and all were obliged to pass that same "*companie.*" But, deprived of their head, the roisterers had quieted down, and did not utter a word; one only, the bravest of them all, muttered, as he shook his head: "Well, but this . . . this, God knows, what . . . after this"; and another even pulled off his hat. Insároff seemed to them very for-

midable, and with good cause: something malevolent, something dangerous had come forth in his face. The Germans rushed to fish their comrade out, and the latter, as soon as he found himself on dry land, began tearfully to curse and shout after those "Russian bandits," that he would complain, that he would go to Count von Kiezeritz himself. . . .

But the "Russian bandits" paid no attention to his shouts, and made all haste to the castle. All maintained silence while they walked through the park, only Anna Vasílievna sighed slightly. But at last they approached their carriages, halted, and an irrepressible, interminable shout of laughter arose from them, as with the heaven-dwellers of Homer. First Shúbin burst out shrilly, like a crazy person; after him Berséneff rattled away like a shower of peas; then Zóya scattered fine pearls of laughter; Anna Vasílievna, also, suddenly went into such paroxysms of mirth, that Eléna could not refrain from smiling; even Insároff, at last, could not resist. But louder and longer than all the rest, shouted Uvár Ivánovitch; he roared until he had a stitch in the side, until he sneezed, until he strangled. He would quiet down a little, and say through his tears: "I . . . think . . . that that knocked him out . . . . but . . . he . . . . splash, kerflop!" . . . And with the last, convulsively expelled word, a fresh outburst of laughter shook

his whole frame. Zóya spurred him on still more. "I see his legs in the air," said she. . . .

"Yes, yes," chimed in Uvár Ivánovitch,—"his legs, his legs . . . and then! and he went spla-ash ker-flop!"

"Yes, and how did he manage it, for the German was twice as big as he?" asked Zóya.

"I 'll tell you,"—replied Uvár Ivánovitch, wiping his eyes,—"I saw him seize the man by his belt with one hand, thrust under his leg, and then, slap-dash! I hear: 'What 's this?' . . . but he went splash, ker-flop!"

The equipages had been on their way for a long time, the castle of Tzarítzyno had long vanished from sight, and still Uvár Ivánovitch could not calm down. Shúbin, who was again driving with him in the calash, became ashamed of him at last.

And Insároff felt conscience-stricken. He sat in the carriage opposite Eléna (Berséneff had placed himself on the box) and preserved silence: she, also, was silent. He thought that she was condemning him; but she was not condemning him. She had been very greatly frightened at the first moment; then she had been struck by the expression of his face; after that, she had been engaged in meditation. It was not quite clear to her what she was meditating about. The feeling which she had experienced during the course of the day had disappeared;

she was conscious of this; but it had been replaced by something else which, as yet, she did not comprehend. The *partie de plaisir* had lasted too long: the evening had imperceptibly merged into night. The carriage rolled swiftly onward, past ripe fields, where the air was suffocating and fragrant and redolent of grain, again past broad meadows, and their sudden coolness beat upon the face in a light wave. The sky seemed to be smoking at the edges. At last the moon floated up, dull and red. Anna Vasílievna was dozing; Zóya was hanging out of the window, and gazing at the road. At last it occurred to Eléna that she had not spoken to Insároff for more than an hour. She turned to him with a trivial question: he immediately answered her joyously. Certain indefinite sounds began to be wafted through the air: Moscow was hastening to meet them. Ahead of them twinkled tiny points of light; their number kept constantly increasing; at last, the stones of the pavement rang beneath their wheels. Anna Vasílievna waked up; all in the carriage began to talk, although not one of them was able to hear what the conversation was about, so loudly did the pavement resound beneath the two carriages and the thirty-two hoofs of the horses. Long and wearisome did the transit from Moscow to Kúntzovo appear; everybody was asleep or silent, with heads nestled in various corners; Eléna

alone did not close her eyes: she never removed them from Insároff's dark figure. Melancholy had descended upon Shúbin: the breeze blew in his eyes, and irritated him; he muffled himself in the collar of his cloak, and all but wept. Uvár Ivánovitch was snoring blissfully, swaying to right and left. At last the equipages came to a halt. Two footmen carried Anna Vasílievna from the carriage; she was completely done up, and announced to her fellow-travellers, as she took leave of them, that she was barely alive; they began to thank her, but she merely repeated: "Barely alive." Eléna shook Insároff's hand for the first time; and sat for a long time, without undressing, at her window; while Shúbin seized the opportunity to whisper to Berséneff as the latter departed:

"Well, and why is n't he a hero?—he pitches drunken Germans into the water!"

"But thou didst not do even that,"—retorted Berséneff, and went home with Insároff.

The dawn was already invading the sky when the two friends regained their lodgings. The sun had not yet risen, but the chill had already set in, the grey dew covered the grass, and the first larks were carolling on high in the half-twilight aërial abyss, whence, like a solitary eye, gazed one huge, last star.

XVI

SHORTLY after Eléna had made Insároff's acquaintance, she had (for the fifth or sixth time) begun a diary. Here are excerpts from that diary:

"*June* . . . . Andréi Petróvitch brings me books, but I cannot read them. I am ashamed to confess this to him; I do not wish to return the books, to lie, to say that I have read them. It seems to me that that would grieve him. He notices everything in me. Apparently, he is very much attached to me. He is a very nice man, is Andréi Petróvitch.

" . . . . What is it that I want? Why is my heart so heavy, so languid? Why do I gaze with envy at the birds which flit past? I believe that I would like to fly with them, fly—whither I know not, only far away from here. And is not that desire sinful? Here I have a mother, a father, a family. Do not I love them? No! I do not love them as I would like to love them. It is terrible for me to speak this out, but it is the truth. Perhaps I am a great sinner; perhaps that is the reason why I am so sad, why I have no peace. Some hand or other lies heavy on me, is crushing me. It is as though I were in prison, and as though the walls were on the point of falling upon me. Why do not other people feel this? Whom shall I love, if I am cold to my own

people? Evidently, papa is right: he accuses me of loving only dogs and cats. I must think this over. I pray but little; I must pray. . . . But it seems to me that I could love!

" . . . . I am still timid with Mr. Insároff. I do not know why; I am not so very young, I think, and he is so simple and kind. He sometimes wears a very serious face. It must be that he has no time for us. I feel it, and I am ashamed, as it were, to rob him of his time. Andréi Petróvitch—is another matter. I am ready to chat with him all day long. But he keeps talking to me about Insároff. And what terrible details! I saw him in my dreams last night, with a dagger in his hand. And he seemed to say to me: 'I will kill thee, and kill myself.' What nonsense!

" . . . . Oh, if some one would only say to me: 'Here, this is what thou shouldst do!' To be good—that is not enough; to do good . . . yes; that is the principal thing in life. But how shall I do good? Oh, if I could only control myself! I do not know why I think so often of Mr. Insároff. When he comes, and sits, and listens attentively, but makes no effort himself, no fuss, I gaze at him, and find it agreeable—nothing more; but when he goes away, I keep recalling his words, and I am vexed with myself, and I even grow excited . . . I know not why. (He speaks French badly, and is not ashamed of it—I like that.) However, I always do think a great deal about new people. In chatting with him, I suddenly recalled our butler Vasíly, who dragged a helpless old man from a burning cottage, and came near perishing himself. Papa called him a fine fellow, mamma gave him five rubles, but I wanted to bow down at his feet.

He had a simple, even a stupid face, and he became a drunkard afterward.

" . . . . . To-day I gave a copper coin to a poor woman, and she said to me: ' Why art thou so sad? ' And I did not even suspect that I had a sad aspect. I think it arises from the fact that I am alone, always alone, with all my good and all my bad. I have no one to whom I can give my hand. The one who approaches me is not the one I want, and the one I would like . . . . passes me by.

" . . . . I do not know what is the matter with me to-day; my head is in a snarl, I am ready to fall on my knees and beg and pray for mercy. I do not know who is doing it, or how it is being done, but it seems as though I were being murdered, and I shriek inwardly and rebel: I weep, and cannot hold my peace. . . . My God! My God! quell thou these transports in me! Thou alone canst do this, all else is powerless: neither my insignificant alms, nor occupations, nothing, nothing, nothing can help me. I would like to go off somewhere as a servant, truly: I should feel more at ease.

" What is the use of youth, why do I live, why have I a soul, to what end is all this?

" . . . . Insároff, Mr. Insároff—I really do not know how to write—continues to occupy my thoughts. I would like to know what he has in his soul. Apparently, he is so frank, so accessible, yet nothing is visible to me. Sometimes he looks at me with eyes which seem to be scrutinising . . . or is that only my fancy? Paul is constantly teasing me—I am angry with Paul. What does he want? He is in love with me . . . but I do not want his love. He is in love with Zóya also. I am unjust

to him; he told me yesterday, that I did not know how to be unjust half-way . . . that is true. It is very wrong.

" Akh, I feel that unhappiness is necessary to a man, or poverty, or illness, otherwise he grows arrogant at once.

" . . . . Why did Andréi Petróvitch tell me to-day about those two Bulgarians? It seemed as though he told me that with a purpose. What is Mr. Insároff to me? I am angry with Andréi Petróvitch.

" . . . . I take up my pen and do not know how to begin. How unexpectedly he talked with me in the garden to-day! How affectionate and confidential he was! How quickly this has come about! It is as though we were old, old friends, and had only just recognised each other. How could I have failed to understand him hitherto! How near he is to me now! And this is the astonishing part of it: I have become much calmer now. I find it ridiculous: yesterday I was angry with Andréi Petróvitch,—at him,—I even called him *Mr. Insároff;* but to-day . . . Here, at last, is an upright man; here is some one on whom I can rely. This man does not lie: he is the first man I have met who does not lie: all the rest lie, lie continually. Andréi Petróvitch, dear and kind, why do I insult you? No! Andréi Petróvitch is more learned than he, perhaps, perhaps he is even cleverer. . . But, I do not know, he is such a small man beside him. When he speaks of his fatherland, he grows, and grows, and his face becomes handsome, and his voice is like steel, and it seems as though there were not a man in the world before whom he would lower his eyes. And he not only talks—he acts, and will act. I shall question him. . . . How suddenly he turned to me, and smiled at me! . . .

Only brothers smile in that way. Akh, how content I am! When he came to us for the first time, I did not, in the least, think that he would become a close friend so soon! And now it even pleases me that I remained indifferent that first time. Indifferent! Can it be that I am not indifferent now? . . .

" . . . . . It is a long time since I felt such inward peace. It is so still within me, so still. And there is nothing to record. I see him often, that is all. What else is there to record?

" . . . . Paul has shut himself in his room, Andréi Petróvitch has taken to coming more rarely . . . . Poor fellow! it seems to me that he . . . however, that is impossible. I love to talk with Andréi Petróvitch: never a word about himself, always something practical, useful. With Shúbin the case is different. Shúbin is as gorgeously arrayed as a butterfly, and admires his array: butterflies do not do that. However, both Shúbin and Andréi Petróvitch . . . I know what I want to say.

" . . . . *He* finds it agreeable to come to our house, I see that. But why? What has he found in me? Really, our tastes are similar: neither of us is fond of poetry: neither of us knows anything about art. But how much better he is than I am! He is calm, I am in perpetual agitation; he has a road, a goal—but as for me, whither am I going? where is my nest? He is calm, but all his thoughts are far away. The time will come when he will leave us forever, and go away to his own land, yonder, beyond the sea. What of that? God grant he may! Nevertheless, I shall be glad that I have known him while he was here.

"Why is not he a Russian? No, he cannot be a Russian.

"And mamma likes him. She says: 'He is a modest man.' Kind mamma! She does not understand him. Paul holds his peace: he has divined that his hints are displeasing to me, but he is jealous of him. Wicked boy! And by what right? Have I ever . . . . .

"All this is nonsense! Why does this keep coming into my head?

" . . . . But it is really strange that so far, up to the age of twenty, I have never been in love with any one. It seems to me that D. (I shall call him D., I like that name: Dmítry) is so clear in soul because he has given himself wholly to his cause, to his dream. What is there for him to be agitated about? He who has consecrated himself wholly . . . wholly . . . . wholly . . . . has little grief, he no longer is responsible for anything. It is not *I* who will; *it* wills. By the way, he and I both love the same flowers. I plucked a rose to-day. One petal fell, he picked it up. . . . . I gave him the whole rose.

" . . . . D. comes often to us. Yesterday he sat here the whole evening. He wants to teach me Bulgarian. I felt at ease with him, as though at home. Better than at home.

" . . . . The days fly. . . . . I am both happy and, for some reason, apprehensive, and I feel like thanking God, and the tears are not far off. O warm, bright days!

" . . . . I still feel light of heart, as of yore, and only rarely a little sad. I am happy. *Am* I happy?

" . . . . It will be long before I shall forget the

jaunt of yesterday. What strange, novel, terrible impressions! When he suddenly seized that giant and hurled him, like a small ball, into the water, I was not frightened . . . . but he frightened me. And afterward—what an ominous, almost cruel face! How he said: 'He 'll swim out!' It upset me completely. It must be that I have not understood him. And then, when every one was laughing, when I laughed, how pained I felt for him! He was ashamed, I felt that,—he was ashamed before me. He told me that, later on, in the carriage, in the darkness, when I tried to scrutinise him, and was afraid of him. Yes, one cannot jest with him, and he does know how to defend himself. But why that viciousness, why those quivering lips, that venom in the eyes? Or, perhaps it could not be otherwise. Is it impossible to be a man, a champion, and remain gentle and soft? Life is a harsh matter, he said to me not long ago. I repeated this remark to Andréi Petróvitch; he did not agree with D. Which of them is right? And how that day began! How happy I was to walk by his side, even in silence. . . . But I am glad that it happened. Evidently, it was as it should be.

" . . . . Again uneasiness. . . . . I am not quite well.

" . . . . All these last days I have not recorded anything in this note-book, because I did not wish to write. I felt that, whatever I might write, it would not be what was in my soul. . . . And what is in my soul? I have had a long interview with him, which has revealed to me many things. He told me about his plans (by the way, I know now why he has that wound on the neck. . . My God! when I think that he was already condemned

to death, that he barely escaped, that he was wounded . . . . .). He foresees a war, and rejoices at it. And, nevertheless, I have never seen D. so sad. What can he . . . . he! . . . . be sad about? Papa returned from the town, found us together, and gave us rather a strange look. Andréi Petróvitch came: I notice that he has grown very thin and pale. He reproached me for, as he said, treating Shúbin too coldly and carelessly. But I had quite forgotten Paul. When I see him, I will try to repair my fault. But I am not in the mood for him now . . . . nor for any one in the world. Andréi Petróvitch talked to me with a sort of compassion. What is the meaning of all this? Why is all around me and within me dark? It seems to me, that around me and within me something enigmatic is in progress, that the answer must be sought . . . .

" . . . . I did not sleep last night; my head aches. Why should I write? He went away so soon to-day, and I wanted to talk to him. . . . . He seems to shun me. Yes, he does shun me.

" . . . . The answer is found, a light has dawned upon me! O God! have pity on me. . . . I am in love! "

XVII

On the day when Eléna inscribed this last, fateful word in her diary, Insároff sat in Berséneff's room, and Berséneff stood before him with an expression of amazement on his face. Insároff had just announced to him his intention to remove to Moscow on the following day.

"Good gracious!"—exclaimed Berséneff:—"the very finest part of the season is beginning. What will you do in Moscow? What a sudden decision! Or have you received some news?"

"I have received no news," returned Insároff —"but, according to my views, it is impossible for me to remain here."

"But how is it possible . . . . ."

"Andréi Petróvitch,"—said Insároff,—"be so good as not to insist, I entreat you. It pains me to part with you, but it cannot be helped."

Berséneff stared fixedly at him.

"I know,"—he said at last,—"you are not to be convinced. And so, the matter is settled?"

"Completely settled,"—replied Insároff, rising and withdrawing.

Berséneff strode about the room, seized his hat, and betook himself to the Stákhoffs.

"You have something to impart to me,"—Eléna said to him, as soon as they were left alone together.

"Yes; how did you guess?"

"No matter. Tell me, what is it?"

Berséneff communicated to her Insároff's resolve.

Eléna turned pale.

"What does it mean?"—she articulated with difficulty.

"You know,"—said Berséneff,—"that Dmítry Nikanórovitch does not like to give an account of his actions. But I think . . . . Let us sit down, Eléna Nikoláevna; you do not seem to be quite well . . . . I think I can guess the real cause of this sudden departure."

"What—what is the cause?" repeated Eléna, clasping Berséneff's hand tightly, without herself being aware of it, in her hands, which had grown cold.

"Well, you see,"—began Berséneff with a melancholy smile—"how shall I explain it to you? I must revert to last spring, to the time when I became more intimately acquainted with Insároff. I then met him at the house of a relation; this relation had a daughter, a very pretty young girl. It seemed to me that Insároff was not indifferent to her and I said so to him. He laughed, and answered me that I was mistaken, that his heart had not suffered, but that he would go away at

once, if anything of that sort should happen with him, as he did not wish—those were his very words—to betray his cause and his duty for the satisfaction of his personal feelings. 'I am a Bulgarian,' he said, 'and I want no Russian love.'"

"Well . . . and do you . . . . now . . . ." whispered Eléna, involuntarily turning away her head, like a person who is expecting a blow, but still not releasing Berséneff's hand from her grasp.

"I think"—he said, and lowered his voice—"I think that that has now happened which I then erroneously assumed."

"That is to say . . . you think . . . . do not torture me!"—broke out Eléna suddenly.

"I think,"—hastily went on Berséneff,—"that Insároff has now fallen in love with a Russian maiden, and, in accordance with his vow, he is resolved to flee."

Eléna gripped his hand still more tightly, and bent her head still lower, as though desirous of hiding from the sight of an outsider the flush of shame which overspread her whole face and neck with sudden flame.

"Andréi Petróvitch, you are as kind as an angel,"—she said,—"but, surely, he will come to bid us farewell?"

"Yes, I assume that he will certainly come, because he does not wish to go . . ."

"Tell him, tell him . . . ."

But here the poor girl broke down: tears streamed from her eyes, and she rushed from the room.

"So that is how she loves him," thought Berséneff, as he slowly wended his way homeward. "I did not expect that; I did not expect that it was already so strong. I am kind, she says,"—he continued his meditations . . . . "Who shall say by virtue of what feelings and motives I have communicated all this to Eléna? But not out of kindness, not out of kindness. Is it that accursed desire to convince myself whether the dagger is still sticking in the wound? I must be content—they love each other, and I have helped them. . . . 'The future mediator between science and the Russian public,' Shúbin calls me; evidently it is written in my destiny that I shall be a mediator. But what if I have made a mistake? No, I have not. . . ."

It was bitter for Andréi Petróvitch, and Raumer never entered his head.

On the following day, at two o'clock, Insároff presented himself at the Stákhoffs. As though expressly at that hour, in Anna Vasílievna's drawing-room sat a neighbour, the wife of the arch-priest, who was a very kind and respectable woman, but had had a trifling unpleasantness with the police, because she had taken it into her head, at the very hottest part of the day, to bathe in

a pond near a road along which the family of some influential general or other was wont to drive. The presence of an outsider was, at first, even agreeable to Eléna, from whose face every drop of blood had fled as soon as she heard Insároff's tread; but her heart died within her at the thought that he might take leave without having spoken with her in private. He also appeared embarrassed, and avoided her gaze. "Is it possible that he will take leave at once?" thought Eléna. In fact, Insároff was on the point of addressing Anna Vasílievna, when Eléna rose, and hastily called him aside to the window. The arch-priest's wife was surprised, and tried to turn round; but she was so tightly laced that her corset squeaked at every movement she made. She remained motionless.

"Listen,"—said Eléna hurriedly,—"I know why you are come; Andréi Petróvitch has told me of your intention; but I beg you, I entreat you, not to bid us farewell to-day, but to come hither to-morrow at an earlier hour—about eleven o'clock. I must say a couple of words to you."

Insároff inclined his head in silence.

"I shall not detain you. . . . Do you promise me?"

Again Insároff bowed, but said nothing.

"Come here, Lénotchka,"—said Anna Vasí-

lievna,—" see here: what a splendid reticule the mátushka [1] has!"

"I embroidered it myself," said the archpriest's wife.

Eléna quitted the window.

Insároff did not remain more than a quarter of an hour at the Stákhoffs'. Eléna watched him covertly. He fidgeted about on his seat as usual, did not know where to fix his eyes, and went away in a strange, abrupt manner, just as though he had vanished.

The day passed slowly for Eléna; still more slowly did the long, long night drag out its course. Eléna, at times, sat on her bed, clasping her knees with her arms, and with her head resting on them; again she walked to the window, pressed her burning brow to the cold glass, and thought, thought, thought, until she was exhausted, the same thoughts, over and over again. Her heart had not precisely turned to stone, nor yet had it vanished from her breast; she did not feel it, but the veins in her head throbbed violently, and her hair burned her, and her lips were parched. "He will come . . . he did not bid mamma good-bye . . . he will not deceive . . . . . Can it be that Andréi Petróvitch spoke the truth? It cannot be.

[1] *Mátushka*—dear little mother—is the characteristic Russian form of address for women of all classes; but it is particularly applied to the wives of ecclesiastics. *Bátiushka*—dear little father—is used, generally and specifically, in the same way.—TRANSLATOR.

. . . . He did not promise in words to come. . . Can it be that I have parted from him forever?" . . . . Such thoughts as these never quitted her . . . precisely that, never quitted her: they did not come, they did not return,—they surged to and fro incessantly within her, like a fog. —"He loves me!" suddenly flared up through all her being, and she stared intently into the gloom; a mysterious smile, unseen by any one, parted her lips . . . . . but she instantly shook her head, laid the clenched fingers of her hand against her nape, and again, like a fog, the former thoughts surged within her. Just before dawn, she undressed herself, and went to bed, but could not sleep. The first fiery rays of the sun beat into her room. . . . "Oh, if he does love me!"—she suddenly exclaimed, and, unabashed by the light which illuminated her, she stretched out her arms in an embrace. . . .

She rose, dressed herself, went down-stairs. No one was awake in the house as yet. She went into the garden; but in the garden it was so still, and green, and cool, the birds chirped so confidingly, the flowers gazed forth so gaily, that she felt uncomfortable.—"Oh!"—she thought, "if it is true, there is not a single blade of grass which is happier than I,—but is it true?" She returned to her chamber, and, for the sake of killing time, began to change her gown. But everything slipped and fell from her hands, and she was still

sitting, half-clad, in front of her dressing-glass when she was summoned to drink tea. She went down-stairs; her mother observed her pallor, but said merely: "How interesting thou art to-day!" and, sweeping a glance over her, she added: "That gown is very becoming to thee; thou shouldst always put it on when thou hast a mind to please any one." Eléna made no reply, and seated herself in a corner. In the meanwhile, the clock struck nine; two hours still remained before eleven. Eléna took up a book, then tried to sew, then took to her book again; then she made a vow to herself that she would walk the length of one avenue one hundred times, and did it; then for a long time she watched Anna Vasílievna laying out her game of patience . . . . and glanced at the clock: it was not yet ten. Shúbin came into the drawing-room. She tried to talk to him, and begged him to excuse her, without knowing why she did so. . . . Her every word did not so much cost her an effort as it evoked in her a sort of surprise. Shúbin bent down to her. She expected a jeer, raised her eyes, and beheld before her a sorrowful and friendly face. . . She smiled at that face. Shúbin also smiled at her in silence, and quietly left the room. She wanted to detain him, but did not immediately recall his name. At last the clock struck eleven. She began to wait, wait, wait, and listen. She could no longer do anything: she had ceased even to think. Her

heart came to life, and began to beat more and more loudly, and, strange to say! the time seemed to fly more swiftly. A quarter of an hour elapsed, half an hour passed, several minutes more passed, as it seemed to Eléna; and suddenly she started: the clock did not strike twelve, it struck one.— "He will not come, he is going away without saying good-bye. . . ." This thought, together with the blood, rushed to her head. She felt that she was choking, that she was on the point of sobbing. . . . She ran to her room, and fell face down on her clasped hands on the bed.

For half an hour she lay motionless; tears streamed between her fingers on the pillow. Suddenly she sat up: something strange had taken place in her; her face underwent a change, her wet eyes dried of their own accord and beamed, her eyebrows drew together, her lips compressed themselves. Another half-hour passed. For the last time, Eléna bent her ear to hear whether a familiar voice would be wafted to her. She rose, put on her hat and gloves, threw a mantilla over her shoulders, and slipping unseen out of the house, she walked briskly along the road which led to Berséneff's lodging.

XVIII

Eléna walked along with drooping head and eyes fixed unswervingly in front of her. She feared nothing, she considered nothing; she wanted to see Insároff once more. She walked on, without noticing that the sun had long since disappeared, veiled in heavy, dark clouds, that the wind was roaring in gusts among the trees and whirling her gown about, that the dust had risen suddenly, and was sweeping in a column along the road. . . . Large raindrops began to patter, she did not notice them; but the rain came faster and faster, with constantly increasing violence, the lightning flashed, the thunder pealed. Eléna halted, and glanced about her. . . . Fortunately for her, not far from the spot where the thunder-storm had overtaken her, there was an ancient, abandoned chapel, over a ruined well. She ran to it, and entered beneath the low shed. The rain poured down in torrents; the whole sky was obscured. With mute despair Eléna stared at the fine network of swiftly falling drops. Her last hope of seeing Insároff had vanished. A poor old beggar-woman entered the little chapel, shook herself, said with an obeisance, " Out of the rain, dear little mother," and, grunting and groaning,

seated herself on a projection beside the well. Eléna put her hand in her pocket: the old woman observed the gesture, and her face, wrinkled and yellow, but once beautiful, lighted up. "Thank thee, my benefactor, my dear," she began. There was no purse in Eléna's pocket, but the old woman still held her hand outstretched. . . .

"I have no money, granny,"—said Eléna,—"but here, take this, it will be of some use."

She gave her her handkerchief.

"O-okh, my beauty,"—said the beggar-woman, "of what use to me is thy little kerchief! None, unless to give to my granddaughter when she marries. May the Lord reward thee for thy kindness!"

A clap of thunder pealed out.

"O Lord Jesus Christ," muttered the beggar, and crossed herself thrice.—"But I think I 've seen thee before,"—she added, after a pause. "Hast not thou given me Christ's alms?"

Eléna cast a glance at the old woman, and recognised her.

"Yes, granny,"—she replied.—"Didst not thou ask me why I was so sad?"

"Just so, my dear, just so. That 's how I knew thee. And thou seemest to be living in affliction now also. Here, thy little handkerchief is damp—with tears, of course. Okh, you young girls, you all have one grief, one great woe!"

"What grief, granny?"

"What grief? Ekh, my good young lady, thou canst not dissemble with me, an old woman. For I have been young myself, my dear, I too have passed through those trials. Yes. And here 's what I will say to thee, for thy kindness: if a good man, not a giddy fellow, has fallen to thy lot, do thou cling to him—cling tighter than death. If it is to be, it will be; if it is not to be, evidently such is the will of God. Yes. Why art thou surprised at me? I 'm that same fortune-teller. If thou wishest, I will carry away all thy woe with thy handkerchief! I 'll carry it away, and that 's the end of it. Seest thou, the rain is slackening; do thou wait a bit yet, but I will go on. It won't be the first time I 've been drenched by it. Now remember, my dear little dove: there was a grief, the grief has flowed away, there is not a trace of it. Lord, have mercy!"

The beggar rose from the projection, emerged from the chapel, and went her way. Eléna stared after her in amazement. "What does it mean?" she whispered involuntarily.

The rain descended in a steadily decreasing network, the sun flashed forth for a moment. Eléna was already preparing to abandon her refuge. All at once, half a score of paces from the chapel, she beheld Insároff. Wrapped in his cloak, he was walking along the selfsame

road by which Eléna had come; he appeared to be hastening homeward.

She braced herself with her hand on the decrepit railing of the little porch, and tried to call him, but her voice failed her. . . . Insároff was already passing on without raising his head. . . . .

"Dmítry Nikanórovitch!"—she said at last. Insároff came to an abrupt halt, and glanced around. . . . . At the first moment he did not recognise Eléna, but he immediately advanced toward her.—"You! you here!" he exclaimed.

She drew back, in silence, into the chapel. Insároff followed Eléna.

"You here?"—he repeated.

Still she said nothing, and merely gazed at him with a sort of long, soft glance. He dropped his eyes.

"You have come from our house?"—she asked him.

"No . . . not from your house."

"No?"—repeated Eléna, and tried to smile. —"Is that the way you keep your promises? I have been expecting you all the morning."

"I made no promise yesterday, if you remember, Eléna Nikoláevna."

Again Eléna smiled faintly, and passed her hand across her face. Both face and hand were very pale.—"Evidently, you meant to go away without saying good-bye to us?"

"Yes,"—said Insároff, surlily and dully.

"What? After our acquaintance, after those conversations, after everything. . . . Consequently, if I had not met you here by chance" (Eléna's voice began to tremble, and she paused for a moment) . . . "you would have gone away, and would not have pressed my hand for the last time, and you would not have regretted it?"

Insároff turned away.—"Eléna Nikoláevna, please do not talk like that. Even without that, I am not in a cheerful mood. Believe me, my decision has cost me a great effort. If you knew . . . . ."

"I do not wish to know,"—Eléna interrupted him, in affright,—"why you are going. . . . Evidently, it is necessary. Evidently, we must part. You would not grieve your friends without cause. But do friends part in this way? For you and I are friends, are we not?"

"No,"—said Insároff.

"What? . . ." said Eléna. Her cheeks became suffused with a faint flush.

"That is precisely the reason why I am going away,—that we are not friends. Do not force me to say that which I do not wish to say,—which I will not say."

"You were frank with me in former days," articulated Eléna, with a tinge of reproach.

"I could be frank then,—I had nothing to hide; but now . . . ."

"But now?"—asked Eléna.

"But now . . . . But now I must depart. Farewell."

If, at that moment, Insároff had raised his eyes to Eléna, he would have perceived that her face was growing brighter and brighter, in proportion as he himself grew more frowning and lowering; but he stared persistently at the floor.

"Well, good-bye, Dmítry Nikanórovitch,"—she began.—"But, at least, since we have already met, give me your hand now."

Insároff started to extend his hand.—"No, I cannot do that, either,"—he said, and again turned away.

"You cannot?"

"I cannot. Farewell." And he went toward the exit from the chapel.

"Wait a little longer,"—said Eléna.—"You seem to be afraid of me. But I am braver than you are,"—she added with a sudden slight shiver coursing all over her body.—"I can tell you . . . would you like to have me? . . . . why you have found me here? Do you know where I was going?"

Insároff looked at Eléna in amazement.

"I was going to you."

"To me?"

Eléna covered her face.—"You have wanted to make me say that I love you,"—she whispered:—"there now . . . . I have said it."

"Eléna!"—cried Insároff.

She removed her hands, cast a glance at him, and threw herself on his breast.

He held her in a close embrace, and remained silent. There was no need for him to tell her that he loved her. Eléna could understand, from his mere exclamation, from the instantaneous transfiguration of the whole man, from the way in which the bosom to which she clung so confidingly rose and fell, from the way in which the tips of his fingers caressed her hair, that she was beloved. He maintained silence, and she required no words. "He is here, he loves . . . . What more is needed?" The silence of bliss, the silence of a tranquil harbour, of a goal attained, that heavenly silence which imparts even to death itself both meaning and beauty, filled her whole being with its divine flood. She wished for nothing, because she possessed everything.—"Oh, my brother, my friend, my dear!"—whispered her lips, and she herself did not know whose heart it was, his or hers, which beat so sweetly and melted in her breast.

And he stood motionless, he held in his strong embrace this young life which had surrendered itself to him, he felt on his breast this new, infinitely precious burden: a feeling of emotion, a feeling of inexpressible gratitude, shattered his firm soul to dust, and tears, which he had never yet shed, welled up to his eyes. . . . .

But she did not weep; she merely kept reiterating: "Oh, my friend,—oh, my brother!"

"So thou wilt follow me everywhere?"—he said to her, a quarter of an hour later, still holding her, as before, in his embrace, and supporting her.

"Everywhere, to the end of the world. Where thou art, there I shall be."

"And thou art not deceiving thyself, thou knowest that thy parents will never consent to our marriage?"

"I am not deceiving myself; I know it."

"Thou knowest that I am poor, almost a beggar?"

"Yes."

"That I am not a Russian, that it is not decreed that I shall dwell in Russia, that thou wilt be compelled to break all thy ties with thy fatherland, with thy kin?"

"I know, I know."

"Thou knowest, also, that I have consecrated myself to a difficult cause, an ungrateful cause, that I . . . that we shall be forced to undergo not only dangers, but even privations,—humiliation, perchance?"

"I know, I know everything . . . . I love thee!"

"That thou wilt be obliged to abandon all thy habits,—that yonder, alone, among strangers, thou mayest be compelled, perhaps, to toil . . . ."

She laid her hand on his lips.—" I love thee, my darling."

He began passionately to kiss her slender, rosy hand. Eléna did not remove it from his lips, and with a sort of childlike joy, with laughing curiosity, she looked on while he covered now the hand, now its fingers, with kisses. . . .

All at once she flushed scarlet, and hid her face on his breast.

He raised her head caressingly, and gazed intently into her eyes.—" Long live my wife, before men and before God! " he said to her.

XIX

An hour later, Eléna, with her hat on one arm, her mantilla on the other, entered the drawing-room of the villa. Her hair was slightly out of curl, a tiny pink spot was visible on each cheek, the smile refused to depart from her lips, her eyes, blinking and half-shut, also smiled. She could hardly walk from fatigue, but this fatigue was agreeable to her, and everything pleased her. Everything seemed to her fair and caressing. Uvár Iványovitch was sitting near the window; she went up to him, laid her hand on his shoulder, stretched herself a little, and laughed in an involuntary sort of way.

"What is it?" he asked, in surprise.

She did not know what to say. She wanted to kiss Uvár Iványovitch.

"Splash, ker-flop!" she said at last.

But Uvár Iványovitch did not move an eyelash, and kept on staring in astonishment at Eléna. She dropped her hat and mantilla on him.

"My dear Uvár Iványovitch,"—she said,—"I am sleepy, I am tired,"—and again she began to laugh, and dropped into an arm-chair beside him.

"H'm,"—shouted Uvár Iványovitch, and began to twiddle his fingers.

And Eléna looked around her, and thought: —"I must soon part from all this . . . and it is strange: I have no fear, no doubt, no pity. . . . No, I am sorry for mamma!" Then again the chapel rose up before her, again her voice rang out, she felt his arms around her, her heart was glad, but stirred feebly: the languor of happiness lay upon it. She recalled the old beggar-woman. "She really did carry away all my woe,"—she thought. "Oh, how happy I am! how undeserved it is! how sudden!" If she had let go of herself in the slightest degree, she would have shed sweet, interminable tears. She restrained them only by laughing. Whatever attitude she assumed, it seemed to her that there could be none better, more easy: it was as though she were being rocked to sleep. All her movements were slow and soft; what had become of her precipitation, her angularity? Zóya entered: Eléna decided that she had never beheld a more charming little face; Anna Vasílievna entered: Eléna felt a prick of compunction, but with what tenderness did she embrace her kind mother, and kiss her on the brow, near the hair, which was already beginning to turn grey! Then she betook herself to her own room: how everything smiled at her there! With what a sensation of shame-faced triumph and submission did she seat herself on her bed, where, three hours before, she had spent such bitter moments! "And, of course, I

knew even then that he loved me," she thought, —" yes, and before that . . . Aï, no! no! that is a sin. ' Thou art my wife . . .' " she whispered, covering her face with her hands, and flung herself on her knees.

Toward evening she became more pensive. Sadness took possession of her at the thought that she would not soon see Insároff again. He could not remain with Berséneff without arousing suspicion, so this is what he and Eléna had decided upon: Insároff was to return to Moscow, and come to visit them a couple of times before the autumn; she, on her side, had promised to write him letters, and, if possible, appoint a meeting somewhere in the neighbourhood of Kúntzovo. At tea-time she descended to the drawing-room, and found there all her own household, and Shúbin, who looked keenly at her as soon as she made her appearance; she wanted to chat with him, in a friendly way, but, as of old, was afraid of his penetration, was afraid of herself. It struck her that not for nothing had he left her in peace for more than two weeks. Berséneff soon arrived, and transmitted to Anna Vasílievna Insároff's greeting, together with his apologies for having returned to Moscow, without having presented his respects to her. The name Insároff was uttered, for the first time that day, in Eléna's presence; she felt that she blushed; she understood, at the same time, that

it was proper for her to express her regret at the departure of so good an acquaintance: but she could not force herself to dissimulate, and continued to sit motionless and silent, while Anna Vasílievna moaned and grieved. Eléna tried to keep near Berséneff: she was not afraid of him, although he knew a part of her secret; she sought refuge under his wing from Shúbin, who continued to stare at her—not sneeringly, but attentively. Berséneff, also, was overcome by surprise in the course of the evening: he had expected to see Eléna more melancholy. Happily for her, a dispute about art arose between him and Shúbin—she moved away, and listened to their voices as though athwart a dream. Gradually, not only they, but the whole room, everything which surrounded her, began to seem to her like a dream—everything: the samovár on the table, and Uvár Ivánovitch's short waistcoat, and Zóya's smooth finger-nails, and the portrait in oils on the wall of Grand Duke Konstantín Pávlovitch, everything retreated, everything became shrouded in a mist, everything ceased to exist. Only, she felt sorry for them all. "What do they live for?" she thought.

"Art thou sleepy, Lénotchka?"—her mother asked her. She did not hear her mother's question.

"A half-just suggestion, dost thou say?" . . . These words, sharply uttered by Shúbin, sud-

denly aroused Eléna's attention. "Good gracious,"—he went on,—"that is what taste itself consists of. A half-just suggestion evokes despondency,—that is not according to Christianity; man is indifferent to the unjust,—that is stupid,—but he feels vexation and impatience at the half-just. For instance, if I were to say that Eléna Nikoláevna is in love with one of us, what sort of a suggestion would that be, eh?"

"Akh, Monsieur Paul,"—said Eléna, "I would like to show you my vexation, but really I cannot. I am very tired."

"Why dost not thou go to bed?"—said Anna Vasílievna, who always dozed in the evening herself, and therefore liked to send others to bed. —"Bid me good-night, and go under God's protection,—Andréi Petróvitch will excuse thee."

Eléna kissed her mother, bowed to all, and left the room. Shúbin escorted her to the door.—"Eléna Nikoláevna,"—he whispered to her on the way: "You trample upon Monsieur Paul, you walk pitilessly over him, but Monsieur Paul blesses you, and your little feet, and the shoes on your little feet, and the soles of your shoes."

Eléna shrugged her shoulders, unwillingly offered him her hand—not the one which Insároff had kissed—and, on reaching her room, she

undressed at once, went to bed, and fell asleep. Her slumber was profound, tranquil . . . . . such as not even children have; only a convalescent child, whose mother is sitting beside his cradle, gazing at him and listening to his breathing, sleeps in that way.

XX

"COME to my room for a minute,"—said Shúbin to Berséneff, as soon as he had bidden Anna Vasílievna good-night:—"I have something to show thee."

Berséneff went to his room in the wing. He was surprised at the multitude of studies, statuettes, and busts, enveloped in damp cloths, and set about in all corners of the room.

"I see that thou art at work in earnest,"—he remarked to Shúbin.

"A fellow must do something,"—replied the latter.—"If one thing does n't succeed, another must be tried. However, I, like a Corsican, occupy myself more with the vendetta than with pure art. *Treme Bisanzia!*"

"I do not understand thee,"—said Berséneff.

"Just wait. See here, please to inspect, my dear friend and benefactor, my vengeance number one."

Shúbin removed the wrappings from one figure, and Berséneff beheld a capital bust of Insároff, with an excellent resemblance to the original. Shúbin had seized the features faithfully, to the very smallest detail, and had imparted

to him a magnificent expression: honourable, noble, and bold.

Berséneff went into raptures.

"Why, this is simply splendid!"—he cried.—"I congratulate thee. It is fit for the exhibition! Why dost thou call this a magnificent product of revenge?"

"Why, sir, because I intend to present this magnificent product, as you are pleased to express it, to Eléna Nikoláevna, on her name-day. Do you understand this allegory? We are not blind, we see what goes on around us, but we are gentlemen, my dear sir, and we take our revenge in a gentlemanly way."

"And here,"—added Shúbin, unveiling another figure,—"since the artist, according to the newest code of æsthetics, enjoys the enviable right of incarnating in his own person all sorts of turpitudes, elevating them to a pearl of creation, so we, in elevating this pearl, number two, have avenged ourselves not at all after a gentlemanly fashion, but simply *en canaille.*"

He cleverly pulled away the sheet, and there presented itself to the eyes of Berséneff a statuette, in Dantesque taste, of that same Insároff. Anything more malicious and witty it would have been impossible to imagine. The young Bulgarian was represented as a ram rearing on its hind legs and inclining its horns to butt. Stupid dignity, passion, stubbornness, awkwardness, lim-

itedness, were fairly stamped upon the physiognomy of "the spouse of thin-legged sheep," and, at the same time, the likeness was so striking, so indubitable, that Berséneff could not help roaring with laughter.

"Well? Is it amusing?"—said Shúbin:—"hast recognised the hero? Dost thou advise me to send that to the exhibition also? This, my dear fellow, I shall present to myself on my own name-day. . . . . Your High-Born, permit me to cut a caper!"

And Shúbin gave three leaps, hitting himself behind with the soles of his shoes.

Berséneff picked up the sheet from the floor, and threw it over the statuette.

"Okh, thou art magnanimous," began Shúbin. —"Who the deuce is it, in history, who is considered particularly magnanimous? Well, never mind! But now,"—he went on, solemnly and sadly unwrapping a third, rather large mass of clay,—"thou shalt behold something which shall prove to thee the meekness and perspicacity of thy friend. Thou shalt convince thyself, once more, how a true artist feels the need and the benefit of boxing his own ears. Behold!"

The sheet fluttered in the air, and Berséneff beheld two heads, placed side by side and close together, as though they had grown fast. . . . . He did not immediately comprehend the point; but, on looking more closely, he recognised in one of them Ánnushka, and in the other Shúbin

himself. They were, however, caricatures rather than portraits. Annushka was represented as a handsome, plump girl with a low brow, eyes swimming in fat, and a saucily upturned nose. Her large lips smiled brazenly; her whole face expressed sensuality, heedlessness, and audacity not devoid of good-nature. Shúbin had depicted himself as a gaunt, lean reveller, with sunken cheeks, feebly dangling wisps of thin hair, a senseless expression in his dim eyes, and a nose sharpened like that of a corpse.

Berséneff turned away in disgust.

"A pretty couple, is n't it, brother?"—said Shúbin.—"Wilt not thou condescend to write an appropriate inscription? I have devised inscriptions for the first two pieces. Under the bust will stand: 'A Hero who intends to save his Fatherland!'—Under the statuette: 'Sausage-makers, beware!' And under this piece—what thinkest thou of this?—'The future of the artist Pável Yakóvleff Shúbin.' . . . . Is that good?"

"Stop,"—returned Berséneff.—"Was it worth while to waste time on such . . . . ." he could not immediately hit upon a fitting word.

"An odious thing, didst thou mean to say? No, brother, pardon me, if anything is to go to the exhibition, it should be this group."

"An odious thing, that 's precisely what it is,"—repeated Berséneff.—"And why this nonsense? Thou hast not in thee those pledges for such a development wherewith, unhappily, our

artists are so abundantly gifted. Thou hast simply calumniated thyself."

"Dost thou think so?"—said Shúbin gloomily. —"If they do not exist in me, and if I get inoculated with them, . . . a certain person will be responsible for it. Art thou aware,"—he added, with a tragic frown,—"that I have already tried to drink?"

"Art thou lying?"

"I have tried—by God! I have,"—returned Shúbin, and suddenly grinned and beamed,— "and it tastes bad, brother, it gets into your throat, and your head is like a drum afterward. Even the great Lushtchíkin—Kharlámpy Lushtchíkin, the greatest funnel in Moscow, and, according to others, the 'Great-Russian Funnel'— declared that I should never come to anything. The bottle is nothing to me, according to his words."

Berséneff tried to deal a blow at the group, but Shúbin withheld him.—"Enough, brother, don't strike; it 's good as a lesson, as a scarecrow."

Berséneff began to laugh.

"In that case, all right, I 'll spare thy scarecrow,"—said he—"and long live eternal, pure art!"

"Yes, long may it live!"—chimed in Shúbin. —"With it good is better, and bad is no calamity!"

The friends shook hands warmly, and parted.

XXI

Eléna's first sensation, on awaking, was joyful terror. "Is it possible? Is it possible?" she asked herself, and her heart swooned with happiness. Memories surged in upon her . . . . she was submerged by them. Then again, that same blissful, enraptured silence overshadowed her. But in the course of the morning, Eléna was gradually invaded by uneasiness, and during the days which followed she felt weary and bored. She knew now what she wanted, it is true, but that made it none the easier for her. That never-to-be-forgotten meeting had wrenched her forever out of the old rut: she no longer stood in it, she was far away, and yet everything around her went on in its customary routine, everything took its course, as though nothing were changed; the former life moved on as before; as formerly, Eléna's sympathy and co-operation were counted upon. She tried to begin a letter to Insároff, but even that did not succeed: the words came out on the paper, not exactly dead, but false. She ended her diary: underneath the last line she drew a large dash. That was the past, and with all her thoughts, with all her being, she had gone on into

the future. She was ill at ease. To sit with her mother, who suspected nothing, to listen to her, to answer her—to talk with her—seemed to Eléna a sort of crime; she was conscious of the presence in herself of something false; she grew agitated, although she had nothing to blush for; more than once there arose in her soul an almost unconquerable desire to reveal everything, without reserve, no matter what might happen afterward. "Why," she thought, "did not Dmítry carry me off then, from the chapel, whithersoever he wished? Did not he tell me that I am his wife in the sight of God? Why am I here?" She suddenly began to avoid every one, even Uvár Ivánovitch, who was more amazed and wiggled his fingers more than ever. Nothing around her seemed to her either pleasing, or nice, or even a dream; like a nightmare it oppressed her breast with an immovable, dead burden: it seemed to be reproaching her, and raging at her, and wanting to have nothing to do with her. . . . "Thou art ours, nevertheless," it seemed to say. Even her poor nurslings, the persecuted birds and beasts, gazed at her—at least, so it seemed to her—distrustfully and in hostile wise. She became remorseful and ashamed of her feelings. "But this is my home, all the same," she thought; "my family, my native land. . ."—"No, it is no longer thy native land, it is not thy family," —another voice kept asserting. Terror took pos-

session of her, and she was vexed at her pusillanimity. The mischief was only beginning, and she had already lost patience. . . Was that what she had promised?

She did not speedily regain control of herself. But one week passed, then another. . . . Eléna had recovered her composure somewhat, and had grown used to her new position. She wrote two little notes to Insároff, and carried them herself to the post-office: not on any account—both because of bashfulness and from pride—could she have made up her mind to confide in her maid. She had already begun to expect him. . . But in his stead, one fine morning, Nikolái Artémievitch made his appearance.

XXII

No one in the household had ever yet beheld retired Ensign of the Guards Stákhoff so sour and, at the same time, so self-confident and pompous as on that day. He came into the drawing-room in overcoat and hat,—came in slowly, planting his legs wide apart, and clicking his heels; he walked up to the mirror, and gazed long at himself, shaking his head and biting his lips with calm severity. Anna Vasílievna greeted him with outward excitement and inward joy (she never greeted him otherwise); he did not even take off his hat, did not even bid her good-morning, and silently permitted Eléna to kiss his chamois-leather glove. Anna Vasílievna began to question him about his course of treatment—he made her no reply; Uvár Ivánovitch made his appearance,—he glanced at him and said: "Ba!" As a rule, he treated Uvár Ivánovitch coldly and condescendingly, although he recognised in him "traces of the genuine Stákhoff blood." It is a well-known fact that almost all Russian noble families are convinced of the existence of exclusive race characteristics, peculiar to them alone: more than once it has been our lot to hear discussions "among our own people" concerning "Podsaláskinsky" noses, and "Pe-

repryéevsky" napes. Zóya came in, and made a curtsey before Nikolái Artémievitch. He grunted, threw himself into an arm-chair, ordered coffee, and only then did he take off his hat. The coffee was brought to him; he drank a cupful and, gazing at each person present in turn, articulated through his teeth: "*Sortez, s'il vous plait,*" and turning to his wife, he added: "*Et vous, madame, restez, je vous prie.*"

All left the room, with the exception of Anna Vasílievna. Her head was trembling with excitement. The solemnity of Nikolái Artémievitch's mien impressed her. She expected something unusual.

"What is it?" she cried, as soon as the door was shut.

Nikolái Artémievitch cast an indifferent glance at Anna Vasílievna.

"Nothing in particular. What do you mean by putting on the aspect of some sort of a victim?" he began, quite unnecessarily pulling down the corners of his mouth at every word.—"I only wanted to warn you that you will have a new guest at dinner to-day."

"Who is it?"

"Kurnatóvsky, Egór Andréevitch. You do not know him. Chief secretary in the Senate."

"Is he to dine with us to-day?"

"Yes."

"And it was merely for the purpose of saying

this to me that you have made every one leave the room?"

Again Nikolái Artémievitch cast a glance at Anna Vasílievna,—this time an ironical glance.

"Does that surprise you? Wait a bit, before you are surprised."

He relapsed into silence. Anna Vasílievna also preserved silence for a while.

"I should like . . . ." she began . . . .

"I know that you have always regarded me as an 'immoral' man,"—began Nikolái Artémievitch suddenly.

"I!" murmured Anna Vasílievna, in amazement.

"And perhaps you are right. I do not wish to deny that, as a matter of fact, I have sometimes given you just cause for dissatisfaction" ("The grey horses!" flashed through Anna Vasílievna's head),—"although you must confess, yourself, that with the well-known state of your constitution . . . ."

"But I am not blaming you in the least, Nikolái Artémievitch."

"*C'est possible.* At any rate, I have no intention of justifying myself to-day. Time will justify me. But I consider it my duty to assure you that I know my obligations, and am capable also of looking out . . . . for the interests of . . . . the family which has been confided to my care."

"What does all this mean?" thought Anna Vasílievna. (She could not know that, on the previous evening, in the English Club, in one corner of the divan-room, a dispute had arisen as to the lack of capacity on the part of Russians to make speeches. "Which of us knows how to talk? Just name some one?" one of the disputants had exclaimed.—"Why, here 's Stákhoff, for instance,"—the other had replied, and had pointed to Nikolái Artémievitch, who was standing near by, and who almost squeaked aloud with satisfaction.)

"For example,"—pursued Nikolái Artémievitch,—"there 's my daughter Eléna. Don't you think that it is time for her to walk with firm tread in the pathway . . . to marry, I mean to say. All these philosophisings and philanthropies are good enough in their way, but only to a certain degree, only to a certain age. It is time for her to come out of the clouds, to emerge from the society of divers artists, scholars, and some Montenegrins or other, and do as everybody else does."

"How am I to understand your words?" asked Anna Vasílievna.

"Here now, be so good as to listen to me,"—replied Nikolái Artémievitch, pulling down his lips as before.—"I will tell you plainly, without circumlocution: I have made acquaintance with—I have become intimate with—this young

man, Mr. Kurnatóvsky, in the hope of having him for my son-in-law. I venture to think that, when you have seen him, you will not accuse me of partiality or of precipitancy of judgment." (Nikolái Artémievitch admired his own eloquence as he talked.) "He is excellently educated, a lawyer, with fine manners, thirty-three years of age, chief secretary, collegiate councillor, and wears the order of St. Stanislaus on his neck. You will, I hope, do me the justice to admit that I am not one of those *pères de comédie* who rave over rank alone; but you yourself have told me that Eléna Nikoláevna likes active, resolute men: Egór Andréevitch is the most active man in his profession; now, on the other hand, my daughter has a weakness for magnanimous deeds: so you must know that Egór Andréevitch, just as soon as he attained the possibility—you understand me, the possibility—of existing comfortably on his salary, immediately refused, in the interests of his brothers, to make use of the annual allowance assigned to him by his father."

"And who is his father?" asked Anna Vasílievna.

"His father? His father is also a famous man in his way, of the highest integrity, *un vrai stoique,* a retired major, I believe, and manager of all the estates of the Counts B . . . ."

"Ah!" said Anna Vasílievna.

"Ah! well: what does 'Ah!' mean?" Nikolái Artémievitch caught her up.—"Do you mean to say that you are infected with prejudices?"

"Why, I did not say anything,"—began Anna Vasílievna.

"Yes, you did; you said: 'Ah!' . . . At any rate, I have considered it necessary to forewarn you of my way of thinking, and I venture to opine . . . . I venture to hope that Mr. Kurnatóvsky will be received *à bras ouverts.* He 's no obscure Montenegrin."

"Of course; only, I must summon Vánka, the cook, and order him to add a course."

"You understand that I do not enter into that,"—said Nikolái Artémievitch, rising and putting on his hat, and whistling as he went (he had heard some one say that it is proper to whistle only in one's own house in the country and in the military-riding-school), he strode off for a stroll in the garden. Shúbin peeped at him from the little window of his wing, and silently thrust out his tongue at him.

At ten minutes to four, a posting-carriage drove up to the door of the Stákhoffs' villa, and a man still young, of comely aspect, simply and elegantly attired, alighted from it and ordered that his arrival be announced. He was Egór Andréevitch Kurnatóvsky.

This, among other things, was what Eléna wrote to Insároff on the following day:

"Congratulate me, dear Dmítry, I have a suitor. He dined with us last night; papa made his acquaintance at the English Club, I believe, and invited him. Of course, he did not come as a suitor yesterday. But kind mamma, to whom papa had confided his hopes, whispered in my ear what sort of a visitor he was. His name is Egór Andréevitch Kurnatóvsky; he serves as chief secretary in the Senate. I will first describe to thee his personal appearance. He is short of stature, not so tall as thou art, well built; his features are regular, his hair is closely cut, he wears large side-whiskers. His eyes are small (like thine), brown, alert; his lips flat, broad; in his eyes and on his lips is a perpetual smile, a sort of official smile, as though it were his duty. His manner is very simple, he speaks distinctly, and everything about him is distinct: he walks, laughs, eats, as though he were doing business. 'How she has studied him!' thou art thinking, perchance, at this moment. Yes; in order that I might describe him to thee. And then, how can one help studying one's suitor. There is something iron about him . . . and something dull and empty at the same time—and honourable; they say that he really is very honourable. At table, he sat next to me, and opposite sat Shúbin. At first the conversation turned on certain commercial enterprises: they say he is versed in such things, and came near throwing up his position in order to take charge of a large factory. He made a mistake in not doing it! Then Shúbin began to talk about the theatre; Mr. Kurnatóvsky declared—and, I must admit, without any false modesty—that he understood nothing about art. That reminded me of thee . . . but I thought: 'No, after all, Dmítry and I fail to under-

stand art in another way.' This man seemed to be trying to say: 'I do not understand it, and it is unnecessary, but it is permitted in a well-ordered realm.' Toward Petersburg, and the *comme il faut*, however, he is rather indifferent: he once even called himself a proletarian. 'I 'm a common labourer,' he said. I thought: 'If Dmítry had said that, it would not have pleased me, but let this man have his say! let him brag!' He was very courteous toward me; but it seemed to me, all the while, as though a very, very condescending superior official were talking to me. When he wishes to praise any one, he says that So-and-so *has principles*,—that is his favourite expression. He must be self-confident, industrious, capable of self-sacrifice (thou seest: I am impartial), that is to say, in the matter of sacrificing his advantages, but he is a great despot. It would be a calamity to fall into his power! After dinner, they talked about bribes . . . .

"'I can understand,' said he, 'that, in many cases, the man who takes a bribe is not to blame: he could not act otherwise. But, nevertheless, if he is caught he must be crushed.'

"I exclaimed:—'Crush an innocent man!'

"'Yes, for the sake of the principle.'

"'Which one?' inquired Shúbin. Kurnatóvsky was not exactly disconcerted, nor yet precisely astonished, and said: 'There 's no use in explaining it.'

"Papa, who appears to worship him, chimed in, and said that, of course, it was useless, and, to my vexation, that conversation came to an end. In the evening, Berséneff came, and got into a frightful wrangle with him. Never before have I beheld our kind Andréi Petróvitch

in such a state of excitement. Mr. Kurnatóvsky did not in the least deny the benefits of science, universities, and so forth . . . yet I understood Andréi Petróvitch's wrath. He looks on all that as a sort of gymnastics. Shúbin approached me after dinner, and said: 'This man, and a certain other' (he can never utter your name) 'are both practical persons, but behold, what a difference! There is the genuine, living ideal, furnished by life; while here there is not even the sense of duty, but simply official honesty and activity without underpinning.'—Shúbin is clever, and I remembered his words for thee; but, in my opinion, what is there in common between you? Thou *believest*, and the other man does not, because it is *impossible to believe in one's self alone.*

"It was late when he went away, but mamma contrived to inform me that he was pleased with me, that papa was in raptures . . . . I wonder if he has not already said of me that I 'have principles'? And I came near answering mamma, that I was very sorry, but that I already had a husband. Why is it that papa dislikes thee so much? Mamma might have managed, somehow or other . . . .

"Oh, my dear one! I have described this gentleman to thee so circumstantially in order to stifle my anguish. I cannot live without thee,—I see thee, hear thee constantly . . . . I await thee, only not in our house, as thou hast wished,—imagine, how painful and awkward it would be for us!—but, thou knowest, where I wrote thee, in that grove . . . Oh, my darling! How I love thee!"

XXIII

THREE weeks after Kurnatóvsky's first visit, Anna Vasílievna, to the great joy of Eléna, removed to Moscow, to her great wooden house near the Pretchístenka,—a house with columns, white lyres and wreaths over every window, a second partial storey, servants' quarters, a front garden, and a huge, verdant courtyard with a well in the yard and dog-kennels beside the well. Anna Vasílievna had never returned from her country villa so early, but that year there was an epidemic of influenza when the first frosts of autumn set in; Nikolái Artémievitch, on his side, having finished his course of treatment, had begun to yearn for his wife; moreover, Augustína Christiánovna had gone away to visit her cousin in Revel: some foreign family or other had arrived in Moscow, and was exhibiting plastic poses, *des poses plastiques,* the description of which, in the *Moscow News,* had greatly excited the curiosity of Anna Vasílievna. In short, further sojourn in the villa was inconvenient, and even, as Nikolái Artémievitch phrased it, incompatible with the execution of his

" previous plans." The last two weeks seemed very long to Eléna. Kurnatóvsky came a couple of times, on Sundays: on other days he was occupied. He came specifically for Eléna, but talked more with Zóya, who liked him very much. *" Das ist ein Mann!"* she thought to herself, as she gazed at his swarthy, manly countenance, and listened to his self-confident, condescending speeches. In her opinion, no one had such a wonderfully fine voice, no one understood so well how to utter: " I had the hon-n-nour! " or, " I am very glad." Insároff did not come to the Stákhoffs, but Eléna saw him once, by stealth, in the little grove, close to the Moscow River, where she had appointed the meeting. They barely managed to exchange a few words with each other. Shúbin returned to Moscow in company with Anna Vasílievna; Berséneff, a few days later.

Insároff was sitting in his chamber, and for the third time re-reading letters which had been brought to him from Bulgaria by private hand: they were afraid to send them by the post. He was greatly startled by them. Events were developing swiftly in the East: the occupation of the principality by the Russian army had agitated all minds; a thunder-storm was brewing, the breath of war, close at hand, inevitable, was already perceptible. The conflagration was increasing round about, and no one could foresee how far it would reach, where it would stop;

ancient griefs, long-cherished hopes—everything was beginning to stir. Insároff's heart beat violently: and *his* hopes also had been realized. "But is it not too early? is it not futile?" he thought, as he clenched his hands. "We are not ready yet.—But so be it! I must go."

There was a faint rattling outside the door, it opened swiftly—and Eléna entered the room.

Insároff began to tremble all over, rushed to her, fell on his knees before her, embraced her waist, and pressed his head close to it.

"Thou didst not expect me?"—she said, panting for breath. (She had run swiftly up-stairs.) "My darling! my darling!—So this is where thou livest? I found thee quickly. The daughter of thy landlady showed me the way. We came to town day before yesterday. I wanted to write to thee, but thought it would be better to come myself. I have come to thee for a quarter of an hour. Rise, lock the door."

He rose, hurriedly locked the door, returned to her, and took her hands. He could not speak, he was suffocating with joy. She gazed into his eyes with a smile . . . . . There was so much happiness in them . . . . She was abashed.

"Wait,"—she said affectionately, drawing her hands away from him.

She untied the ribbons of her hat, flung it aside, dropped the mantilla from her shoulders, smoothed her hair, and seated herself on the small,

ancient divan. Insároff did not stir, and gazed at her as though enchanted.

"Sit down,"—said she, without raising her eyes to his, and pointing to a place by her side.

Insároff seated himself, only not on the divan, but on the floor at her feet.

"Here, take off my gloves,"—she said, in a wavering voice. She was beginning to feel alarmed.

He set to work first to unbutton, then to draw off one glove, pulled it half-way off, and glued his lips hungrily to the slender, delicate wrist which shone white beneath it.

Eléna trembled, and tried to push him away with the other hand,—he began to kiss the other hand. Eléna drew it toward her, he threw back his head, she looked into his face, bent forward—and their lips melted together . . . .

A moment passed . . . . She tore herself away, rose, whispered, "No, no," and walked swiftly to the writing-table.

"I am the mistress of the house, here, so thou must have no secrets from me,"—she said, endeavouring to appear at her ease, and standing with her back toward him.—"What a lot of papers! What letters are these?"

Insároff frowned. — "These letters?" — he said, rising from the floor.—"Thou mayest read them."

Eléna turned them over in her hand.—"There

are so many of them, and they are written in such fine script, and I must go away directly . . . . I care nothing for them! They are not from my rival? . . . Why, they are not in Russian,"—she added, as she looked over the thin sheets.

Insároff approached her, and touched her waist. She suddenly turned toward him, smiled brightly at him, and leaned on his shoulder.

"These letters are from Bulgaria, Eléna: my friends write me, they summon me."

"Now? Thither?"

"Yes . . . . now. There is still time, it is still possible to pass through."

Suddenly she flung both arms about his neck. —"Thou wilt take me with thee, wilt thou not?"

He pressed her to his heart.—"O, my dear girl, O my heroine, how hast thou uttered that word! But would not it be a sin, would not it be madness on my part, for me, a homeless, solitary man, to carry thee away with me? . . . And to what a place, moreover!"

She put her hand on his mouth.—"Hush-sh! . . . or I shall get angry, and never come to see thee again. Is not everything settled, is not everything finished between us? Am not I thy wife? Does a wife part from her husband?"

"Wives do not go to war,"—he said, with a half-melancholy smile.

"Yes, when they can stay behind. But can I remain here?"

"Eléna, thou art an angel! . . . But reflect, perhaps I shall be forced to leave Moscow . . . . within a fortnight. I can no longer think of university lectures or of completing my work."

"What of that?" interrupted Eléna.—"Thou must go away soon? Why, if thou wishest it, I will remain with thee now, this very moment, forever with thee, and I will not return home,—wilt thou have it so? Let us set off at once, shall we?"

Insároff clasped her in his arms with redoubled power.—"May God punish me," he cried,—"if I am doing an evil deed! From this day forth, we are united forever!"

"Am I to remain?"—asked Eléna.

"No, my pure girl; no, my treasure. To-day thou art to return home, but hold thyself in readiness. This is an affair which cannot be executed at once; it must be well thought out. Money is needed, a passport . . . . ."

"I have money,"—interrupted Eléna: "eighty rubles."

"Well, that is not much,"—remarked Insároff:—"but everything is useful."

"But I can get more, I can borrow, I can ask mamma . . . . No, I will not ask her . . . . But I can sell my watch . . . . I have earrings, two bracelets, . . . lace."

"It is not a question of money, Eléna; the passport, thy passport, what are we to do about that?"

"Yes, what are we to do about that? But is a passport indispensably necessary?"

"Yes."

Eléna burst out laughing.—"What an idea has occurred to me! I remember, when I was still a little girl, ... a chambermaid left us. She was caught and forgiven; she lived a long time with us; . . . yet every one called her 'Tatyána the Runaway.' I did not think, then, that perhaps I should be a runaway also, like her."

"Art not thou ashamed of thyself, Eléna!"

"Why? Of course, it is better to go with a passport. But if that is impossible . . ."

"We will arrange all that hereafter, hereafter. Wait,"—said Insároff.—"Only give me a chance to look about me, to think it over. We will discuss it all together, in proper fashion. And I have money."

Eléna pushed back with her hand the hair which had fallen over his brow.—"Oh, Dmítry! won't it be jolly to go away together?"

"Yes,"—said Insároff: "and yonder, whither we are going . . . ."

"Well?"—interposed Eléna: "will it not be jolly to die together? but no, why should we die? we shall live, we are young. How old art thou? Twenty-six?"

"Yes."

"And I am twenty. We have a great deal of time ahead of us. Ah! didst thou intend to run

away from me? Thou didst not want Russian love, thou Bulgarian! Let us see now, how thou wilt get rid of me! But what would have happened to us, if I had not come to thee?"

"Eléna, thou knowest what made me go away."

"I know: thou hadst fallen in love, and wert frightened. But is it possible that thou didst not suspect that thou wert beloved?"

"I swear by my honour, Eléna, I did not."

She gave him a swift and unexpected kiss.—"That 's why I love thee. And now, good-bye."

"Canst not thou remain longer?" asked Insároff.

"No, my darling. Dost thou think that it was easy for me to get away alone? The quarter of an hour is long past."—She put on her mantilla and hat.—"And do thou come to us to-morrow evening. No, the day after to-morrow. It will be constrained, tiresome, but there is no help for it: at least, we shall see each other. Good-bye. Let me go."—He embraced her for the last time.—"Aï! look, thou hast broken my chain. Oh, how awkward! Well, never mind. So much the better. I will pass along the Smiths' Bridge, and leave it to be repaired. If I am asked, I shall say that I have been to the Smiths' Bridge." [1]—She grasped the door-handle.—"By the way, I forgot to tell thee: Monsieur Kurnatóvsky will, in all probability, propose to me in a few days.

[1] The fashionable shopping thoroughfare in Moscow.—TRANSLATOR.

But I shall do . . . this . . . to him."—She placed the thumb of her left hand to the tip of her nose, and flourished the rest of her fingers in the air.—"Good-bye. Until we meet again. Now I know the way . . . . But do not waste time. . . . ."

Eléna opened the door a little way, listened, turned toward Insároff, nodded her head, and flew out of the room.

For a minute, Insároff stood in front of the closed door, and listened also. The door below, opening on the courtyard, slammed. He went to the divan, sat down, and covered his eyes with his hand. Nothing of the sort had ever happened with him before.—"How have I deserved this love?"—he thought.—"Is it not a dream?"

But a faint odour of mignonette which Eléna had left behind her in his poor, dark, little room reminded him of her visit. In company with it, there seemed to linger still in the air the accents of a youthful voice, the sound of light young footsteps, and the warmth and freshness of a young, virgin body.

XXIV

Insároff decided to wait for more decisive news, and began to make preparations for departure. It was a very difficult matter. So far as he himself was concerned, no obstacles awaited him: all he had to do was to ask for his passport,—but what was he to do about Eléna? It was not possible to obtain a passport for her in a legal manner. Marry her in secret, and then present himself with her before her parents? . . . "Then they would let us go,"—he thought. "But what if they did not? We shall go, all the same. But if they enter complaint . . . if . . . No, it will be better to obtain a passport, in some way."

He made up his mind to take counsel (of course, without mentioning any names) with one of his acquaintances, a retired—or, rather, a discharged—procurator, an experienced, clever old fellow in the line of secret affairs. This respected man did not live near by: Insároff jogged along slowly, for a whole hour, in a wretched cab, to him, and did not find him at home, to boot; and on the way back, he got drenched to the marrow, thanks to a heavy shower which suddenly came up. On the following morning, Insároff, in spite of a decidedly violent headache, again wended his

way to the retired procurator. The ex-procurator listened to him attentively, taking snuff out of a snuff-box adorned with the picture of a full-busted nymph; and casting sidelong glances at his visitor with his cunning little eyes, which also were snuff-coloured,—listened, and demanded "more circumstantiality in the exposition of the facts"; and observing that Insároff entered unwillingly into details (he had come to him much against his will), he confined himself to the advice to arm himself, first of all, with "cash," and asked him to call again, "when," he added, inhaling snuff over his open snuff-box, "your confidence shall have increased, and your distrust shall have decreased" (he pronounced his *o*'s broadly.[1] "But a passport," he went on, as though to himself, "is a work of—man's hands; you are travelling, for instance: who knows whether you are Márya Bredíkhin, or Karolina Vogelmayer?" A feeling of disgust stirred in Insároff, but he thanked the procurator, and promised to return in a few days.

That evening he went to the Stákhoffs. Anna Vasílievna received him caressingly, reproached him for having completely forgotten them, and, thinking him pale, inquired about his health;

[1] A peculiarity of the clergy, and of those who have received their education in ecclesiastical seminaries, which are open also to those who do not intend to enter the priesthood, for a general education. The Old Church Slavonic, used in the services of the Church, requires that pronunciation. The *o* is also pronounced thus in certain districts.—TRANSLATOR.

Nikolái Artémievitch did not speak a word to him, but merely looked at him with a pensively-careless curiosity; Shúbin treated him coldly, but Eléna amazed him. She was expecting him; she had put on the gown which she had worn on the day of their first meeting in the chapel; but she greeted him with so much composure, she was so amiable and unconcernedly gay, that, to look at her, no one would have thought that the fate of that young girl was already settled, and that the mere secret consciousness of happy love imparted animation to her features, lightness and charm to all her movements. She poured tea, in company with Zóya, jested, chattered; she knew that Shúbin would watch her, that Insároff would be incapable of donning a mask, would be incapable of feigning indifference, and she had armed herself in advance. She was not mistaken: Shúbin never took his eyes from her, and Insároff was extremely taciturn and gloomy throughout the evening. Eléna felt so happy, that she took it into her head to tease him.

"Well, how goes it?"—she suddenly asked him:—"is your plan progressing?"

Insároff was disconcerted.

"What plan?"—he said.

"Why, have you forgotten?"—she replied, laughing in his face: he alone could understand the meaning of that happy laugh:—"your selections from Bulgarian authors for Russians?"

"*Quelle bourde!*" muttered Nikolái Artémievitch, through his teeth.

Zóya seated herself at the piano. Eléna shrugged her shoulders almost imperceptibly, and indicated the door to Insároff with her eyes, as though sending him home. Then she touched the table twice with her finger, making a pause between, and looked at him. He understood that she was appointing a meeting two days hence, and she smiled swiftly when she perceived that he understood her. Insároff rose, and began to take leave: he felt ill. Kurnatóvsky made his appearance. Nikolái Artémievitch sprang to his feet, raised his right hand above his head, and softly lowered it into the palm of the chief secretary. Insároff tarried a few moments longer, in order to have a look at his rival. Eléna nodded her head stealthily, slyly; the master of the house did not consider it necessary to introduce them to each other; and Insároff went away, after having exchanged a final glance with Eléna. Shúbin pondered and pondered—and argued vehemently with Kurnatóvsky over a juridical question which he knew nothing about.

Insároff did not sleep all night, and in the morning felt ill; but he occupied himself with reducing his papers to order, and with writing letters, but his head was heavy and confused, somehow. By dinner-time he was in a fever: he could eat nothing. The fever augmented rapidly to-

ward evening; an aching pain made its appearance in all his limbs, and he had a torturing headache. Insároff lay down on the same little divan where Eléna had so recently sat; he thought, "I am rightly punished. Why did I betake myself to that old scoundrel?" and tried to get to sleep ..... But the malady held him in its grasp. His veins began to throb with fearful violence, his blood blazed with sultry heat, his thoughts circled round and round like birds. He became unconscious. Like a man who has been crushed, he lay prone, and, suddenly, it seemed to him that some one was softly laughing and whispering over him. With an effort he opened his eyes; the light of the candle, which needed snuffiing, cut them like a knife .... What was this? The old procurator was standing before him in a dressing-gown of figured Oriental stuff, with a bandana handkerchief, as he had seen him on the preceding day .... "Karolina Vogelmayer," uttered the toothless mouth. As Insároff gazed, the old man broadened out, swelled, grew, and now he was no longer a man but a tree .... Insároff must climb up its branches. He got caught, fell breast downward on a sharp stone, and Karolina Vogelmayer squatted on her heels, in the shape of a female peddler, and lisped: "Patties, patties, patties,"—and then blood flowed, and swords gleamed intolerably .... "Eléna!"—and everything vanished in a crimson chaos.

XXV

" Some one has come to you, I don't know what he is,—a locksmith, or something of that sort, seemingly," said his servant to Berséneff, on the following evening:—the man was distinguished for his stern treatment of his master, and for a sceptical turn of mind,—" he wants to see you."

" Call him in,"—said Berséneff.

The " locksmith " entered. Berséneff recognised in him the tailor, the landlord of the lodgings where Insároff lived.

" What dost thou want? " he asked him.

" I have come to your grace,"—began the tailor, slowly shifting from foot to foot, and at times flourishing his right hand, with the last three fingers done up in a bandage.—" Our lodger, whoever he is, is very ill."

" Insároff? "

" Exactly so,—our lodger. I don't know, but yesterday he was on his feet from early morning; in the evening, he only asked for a drink, and my housewife carried water to him; but in the night he began to be delirious, we could hear it through the partition; and this morning he could not speak, and he lies there like a log, and such

a fever as he has! 'My God!' I thought, 'who can tell?—the first thing you know, he will die; and I shall have to give notice at the police-station. For he is alone.' And my housewife she says to me: 'Go,' says she, 'to that person, from whom our man hired quarters out of town: perhaps he will tell thee what to do, or will come himself.' So I 've come to your grace, because we cannot, that is . . . ."

Berséneff snatched up his cap, thrust a ruble into the tailor's hand, and immediately drove with him in hot haste to Insároff's lodgings.

He found him lying on the divan unconscious, fully dressed. His face was terribly distorted. Berséneff immediately ordered the landlord and landlady to undress him and carry him to his bed, while he himself flew for a doctor and brought him. The doctor prescribed leeches, Spanish flies, and calomel simultaneously, and ordered him to be bled.

" Is he dangerously ill? " asked Berséneff.

" Yes, very,"—replied the doctor.—" The most violent sort of inflammation of the lungs exists; pneumonia is fully developed, the brain may be implicated also, but the patient is young. His very strength is directed against himself now. I was sent for rather late in the day; however, we will do everything which science demands.

The doctor was still young himself, and believed in science.

Berséneff remained for the night. The landlord and landlady turned out to be kindly and even active folk, as soon as a man was found who took it upon him to tell them what ought to be done. A doctor's assistant made his appearance, and the medical tortures began.

Toward morning, Insaroff recovered consciousness for a few minutes, recognised Berséneff, inquired, "I am ill, apparently?" gazed about him with the dull eyes and languid surprise of a person who is seriously ill, and relapsed into unconsciousness. Berséneff went home, changed his clothing, gathered up some books, and returned to Insároff's lodgings. He had decided to settle down there, for the present, at least. He fenced off the bed with screens, and arranged a little nook for himself near the divan. The day passed neither cheerfully nor quickly. Berséneff absented himself for the purpose of dining. Evening came. He lighted a candle with a shade, and began to read. Everything was quiet round about. In the landlord's quarters, on the other side of the partition, there was audible now a suppressed whispering, now a yawn, now a sigh .... One of the family sneezed, and was reproved in a whisper: behind the screens resounded the heavy and uneven breathing, occasionally broken by a brief groan, and an anxious tossing of the head upon the pillow .... Strange thoughts descended upon Berséneff. He was in the chamber

of a man whose life hung on a thread, of a man who, as he knew, loved Eléna . . . . He recalled the night when Shúbin had run after him and declared to him that she loved him—Berséneff! And now . . . . "What am I to do now?" he asked himself. "Shall I inform Eléna of his illness? Shall I wait? This news is sadder than that which I once imparted to her: 't is strange how fate persists in placing me as a third person between them!" He decided that it was better to wait. His glance fell upon the table, covered with heaps of papers . . . . "Will he carry out his ideas?" thought Berséneff. "Can it be possible that all will vanish?" And he felt sorry for the young life which was being extinguished, and he vowed to himself that he would save it . . . .

It was a bad night. The sick man raved a great deal. Several times Berséneff rose from his little couch, approached the bed on tiptoe, and listened sadly to his mutterings. Once only did Insároff enunciate, with sudden distinctness: "I will not, I will not, thou must not . . ." Berséneff started [1] and looked at Insároff: his face, anguished and ghastly at that moment, was immovable, and his hands lay helpless . . . . "I will not," he repeated, almost inaudibly.

The doctor came early in the morning, shook his head, and prescribed new remedies.—"The

[1] In the Russian, it is plain that the "thou" refers to a woman.—TRANSLATOR.

crisis is still remote,"—he said, as he put on his hat.

"And after the crisis?"—asked Berséneff.

"After the crisis? There are two issues: *aut Cæsar, aut nihil.*"

The doctor departed. Berséneff took a few turns in the street: he needed fresh air. He returned, and took up a book. He had finished Raumer long ago: he was now studying Grote.

All at once, the door opened gently, and the head of the landlady's little daughter, covered, as usual, with a heavy kerchief, was thrust into the room.

"Here,"—she said in a low voice, "is the young lady who gave me the ten kopéks that time. . . . ."

The head of the landlady's little daughter disappeared, and in its place Eléna made her appearance.

Berséneff sprang to his feet, as though he had been scalded; but Eléna did not move, did not cry out. . . . She seemed to have comprehended everything in an instant. A strange pallor overspread her face, she approached the screens, glanced behind them, clasped her hands, and stood rooted to the spot. Another moment, and she would have flung herself on Insároff, but Berséneff restrained her:—"What are you doing?"—he said in an agitated whisper.—"You might kill him!"

She reeled. He led her to the little divan, and seated her.

She looked into his face, then measured him with a glance, then fixed her eyes on the floor.

"Is he dying?"—she asked so coldly and calmly that Berséneff was frightened.

"For God's sake, Eléna Nikoláevna,"—he began, "why do you ask that? He is ill, it is true,—and quite dangerously . . . . But we will save him; I will answer for that."

"He is unconscious?"—she asked, in the same manner as before.

"Yes, he is insensible now . . . . That is always the case at the beginning of these illnesses; but that signifies nothing,—nothing, I assure you. Drink this water."

She raised her eyes to his, and he understood that she had not heard his replies.

"If he dies,"—she said, still in the same voice,—"I shall die also."

At that moment Insároff moaned faintly; she shuddered, clasped her head, then began to untie her hat-strings.

"What are you doing?" Berséneff asked her.

She made no reply.

"What are you doing?"—he repeated.

"I shall stay here."

"What . . . . for long?"

"I don't know, perhaps all day, all night, forever. . . I don't know."

"For God's sake, Eléna Nikoláevna, come to your senses. Of course I could not, in the least, expect to see you here; but, nevertheless, . . . I assume that you have come hither for a short time. Remember, they may miss you at home . . . . ."

"And what of that?"

"They will search for you . . . . they will find you . . . ."

"And what of that?"

"Eléna Nikoláevna! You see . . . he cannot defend you now."

She dropped her head, as though meditating, raised her handkerchief to her lips, and convulsive sobs suddenly burst forth from her breast with shattering force. . . . She flung herself face down on the couch and tried to stifle them, but her whole body heaved and throbbed like a bird which has just been caught.

"Eléna Nikoláevna . . . . for God's sake . . . ." Berséneff kept repeating over her.

"Ah? What is it?"—rang out Insároff's voice.

Eléna straightened up, Berséneff stood stock-still on the spot . . . . After a pause, he approached the bed. Insároff's head was lying, as before, helplessly on the pillow: his eyes were closed.

"Is he delirious?"—whispered Eléna.

"Apparently," replied Berséneff; "but that is nothing; it is always so, especially if . . . ."

"When did he fall ill?"—interrupted Eléna.

"Day before yesterday; I have been here since yesterday. Rely upon me, Eléna Nikoláevna. I will not leave him; all means shall be employed. If necessary, we will call a consultation of doctors."

"'He will die without me,"—she exclaimed, wringing her hands.

"I give you my word to send you news every day about the progress of his malady; and if actual danger should arise . . . ."

"Swear to me that you will send for me instantly, whatever may be the time, by day or night; write a note straight to me . . . . I care for nothing now. Do you hear? do you promise to do this?"

"I promise, in the sight of God."

"Swear it."

"I swear."

She suddenly seized his hand, and before he could draw it away she pressed it to her lips.

"Eléna Nikoláevna . . what are you doing?" he whispered.

"No . . . no . . . it is not necessary . . . ." muttered Insároff incoherently, and sighed heavily.

Eléna approached the screens, clenched her handkerchief in her teeth, and gazed long, long at the sick man. Dumb tears streamed down her cheeks.

"Eléna Nikoláevna,"—said Berséneff to her,—"he may come to himself and recognise you; God knows whether that will be well. Besides, I am expecting the doctor at any minute . . . ."

Eléna took her hat from the divan, put it on, and paused. Her eyes roved sadly over the room. She seemed to be recalling . . . .

"I cannot go,"—she whispered at last.

Berséneff pressed her hand.—"Collect your forces,"—he said,—"calm yourself; you are leaving him in my care. I will go to see you this very evening."

Eléna glanced at him and said:—"Oh, my kind friend!" burst out sobbing, and rushed out of the room.

Berséneff leaned against the door. A sad and bitter feeling, not devoid of a certain strange pleasure, oppressed his heart. "My kind friend!" he thought, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Who is there?"—rang out Insároff's voice.

Berséneff went to him.—"I am here, Dmítry Nikanórovitch. What do you want? How do you feel?"

"Only you?" asked the sick man.

"Only I."

"And she?"

"What she?" said Berséneff, almost in affright.

Insároff remained silent.—"Mignonette,"—he whispered, and his eyes closed again.

XXVI

For eight whole days Insároff hung between life and death. The doctor came incessantly, feeling an interest still, as a young man, in a difficult patient. Shúbin heard of Insároff's dangerous condition, and visited him; his fellow-countrymen—the Bulgarians—made their appearance; among them, Berséneff recognised the two strange figures who had aroused his amazement by their visit to the villa; all expressed their sincere sympathy, and several offered to take Berséneff's place at the bedside of the sick man; but he did not consent, remembering the promise he had made to Eléna. He saw her every day, and communicated to her by stealth—sometimes in words, sometimes in a tiny note—all the details of the malady's course. With what heartfelt apprehension did she await him! How she listened to him, and questioned him! She herself longed constantly to go to Insároff; but Berséneff entreated her not to do so: Insároff was rarely alone. On the first day, when she learned of his illness, she nearly fell ill herself; as soon as she got home she locked herself up in her room, but she was called to dinner, and she presented herself in

the dining-room with such a face that Anna Vasílievna was frightened, and insisted upon putting her to bed. However, Eléna succeeded in controlling herself. "If he dies," she kept reiterating, "I shall die also." This thought soothed her, and gave her strength to appear indifferent. Moreover, no one disturbed her: Anna Vasílievna busied herself with her influenza; Shúbin worked with exasperation; Zóya resigned herself to melancholy, and made preparations for perusing "Werther"; Nikolái Artémievitch was greatly displeased by the frequent visits of the "scholar," the more so as his "views" with regard to Kurnatóvsky made but slow progress: the practical chief secretary was perplexed and was waiting. Eléna did not even thank Berséneff: there are services for which it is painful and mortifying to give thanks. Only once, on her fourth meeting with him (Insároff had passed a very bad night, and the doctor had hinted at a consultation),—only at that meeting did she remind him of his oath. "Well, in that case let us go," he said to her. She rose, and started to dress herself. "No,"—he said; "let us wait until to-morrow."—Toward evening, Insároff was a little easier.

Eight days did this trial last. Eléna seemed calm, but could eat nothing, did not sleep at night. A dull pain existed in all her limbs; a sort of dry, burning mist seemed to fill her head. "Our

young lady is melting away like a candle," her maid remarked concerning her.

At last, on the ninth day, the crisis came. Eléna was sitting in the drawing-room beside Anna Vasílievna, and, without knowing what she was about, was reading to her the *Moscow News*. Berséneff entered. Eléna cast a glance at him (how swift and timid and piercing and startled was the first glance which she cast at him every time!), and immediately divined that he had brought good news. He smiled and gave her a slight nod: she rose to greet him.

" He has come to himself, he is saved; in a week he will be entirely well,"—he whispered to her.

Eléna put out her hand, as though warding off a blow, and said nothing; but her lips quivered and a crimson flush overspread her whole face. Berséneff entered into conversation with Anna Vasílievna, and Eléna went away to her own room, fell on her knees, and began to pray, to thank God . . . . Light, bright tears streamed from her eyes. She suddenly became conscious of an extreme lassitude, laid her head on her pillow, whispered, " Poor Andréi Petróvitch! " and instantly fell asleep with moist eyelashes and cheeks. It was long since she had slept and had not wept.

XXVII

Berséneff's words were realised only in part: the danger was past, but Insároff's strength returned slowly, and the doctor talked about a profound and general shock to his whole organism. Nevertheless, the sick man left his bed and began to walk about the room. Berséneff removed to his own lodgings; but he dropped in every day to see his friend, who was still weak, and every day, as before, he informed Eléna as to the condition of his health. Insároff did not dare to write to her, and alluded to her only indirectly in his conversations with Berséneff; while Berséneff, with feigned indifference, told him about his visits to the Stákhoffs, endeavouring, however, to give him to understand that Eléna had been greatly grieved, and that now she had recovered her composure. Neither did Eléna write to Insároff; she had something else in her head.

One day, when Berséneff had just informed her, with a joyful countenance, that the doctor had already given Insároff permission to eat a cutlet, and that now, probably, he would soon be out, she became pensive and dropped her eyes . . .

"Guess what I want to say to you,"—she said. Berséneff was disconcerted. He understood her.

"Probably,"—he replied, averting his eyes:—"you want to tell me that you wish to see him."

Eléna blushed, and in a barely audible tone articulated: "Yes."

"Well, what then? I think you will find it very easy."—("Fie!" he thought,—"what a hateful feeling is in my heart!")

"You mean to say that I have done it already . . . . " said Eléna.—"But I am afraid . . . . . now, you say, he is rarely alone."

"That is not a difficult matter to remedy,"—returned Berséneff, still without looking at her.—"Of course I cannot forewarn him; but give me a note. Who can prevent your writing to him . . . to so good a friend, in whom you take an interest? There is nothing reprehensible in that. . . . Appoint . . . that is to say, write to him when you will come."

"I am ashamed,"—whispered Eléna.

"Give me the note, I will carry it."

"That is not necessary; but I wanted to ask you . . . . do not be angry with me, Andréi Petróvitch . . . . not to go to him to-morrow!"

Berséneff bit his lip.

"Ah! Yes, I understand; very good, very good."—And adding two or three words more, he hastily departed.

"So much the better, so much the better,"—he thought, as he hurried homeward. "I have not learned anything new, but so much the better.

What 's the use of clinging to the rim of another person's nest? I repent of nothing, I have done what my conscience bade me, but now it is enough. Let them go their way! Not without cause was my father wont to say to me: 'You and I, my dear fellow, are not sybarites, we are not aristocrats, we are not the spoiled darlings of fate and of nature, we are not even martyrs,—we are toilers, toilers, and again toilers. Don thy leathern apron, toiler, and take thyself to thy work-bench, in thy dark workshop! But let the sun shine on others! Our dull life has a pride and a happiness of its own also!' "

On the following morning, Insároff received by the city post a brief note: " Expect me," wrote Eléna, and he gave orders that all callers should be refused.

XXVIII

As soon as Insároff read Eléna's note, he immediately began to put his room to rights, asked his landlady to carry away the phials of medicine, took off his dressing-gown, and put on his coat. His head reeled with weakness and joy, and his heart beat violently. His legs gave way beneath him: he dropped on the divan, and began to look at his watch. "It is now a quarter to twelve,"—he said to himself:—"she cannot possibly get here before twelve; I will think of something else for a quarter of an hour, or I cannot bear it. She cannot possibly come before twelve . . . . ."

The door opened, and with the light rustle of a silken gown, all pale and fresh, young and happy, Eléna entered, and fell upon his breast with a faint cry of joy.

"Thou art alive, thou art mine,"—she kept repeating, as she embraced and caressed his head. He was on the point of swooning; he panted with this proximity, these touches, this happiness.

She sat down beside him, nestled up to him, and began to look at him with that laughing, caressing, and tender glance which beams only in the loving eyes of women.

Her face suddenly became overcast.

"How thin thou hast grown, my poor Dmítry,"—she said, passing her hand over his neck,—"what a beard thou hast!"

"And thou, too, hast grown thin, my poor Eléna,"—he replied, catching her fingers with his lips.

She shook back her curls merrily.

"That is nothing. Thou shalt see how we will recover! The storm has passed over, as on the day when we met in the chapel; it has rushed up and passed away."

He replied to her only by a smile.

"Akh, what days, Dmítry, what cruel days! How can people survive those they love! I knew beforehand, every time, what Andréi Petróvitch was going to tell me, I really did: my life sank and rose together with thine. Good morning, my Dmítry!"

He did not know what to say to her. He wanted to throw himself at her feet.

"I have also observed,"—she went on, tossing back his hair—"I have been making a great many observations during this time, in my leisure—when a person is very, very unhappy, with what stupid attention he watches everything which goes on around him! Really, I sometimes stared at a fly, and all the while, what cold and terror there was in my own soul! But all that is over, it is over, is it not? Everything is bright in future, is it not?

"Thou art the future for me,"—replied Insároff,—"it is bright for me."

"And for me too! But dost thou remember, when I was with thee then, the last time . . . . no, not the last time,"—she repeated, with an involuntary shudder,—"but when we talked together, I alluded to death, I know not why; I did not then suspect that it was standing guard over us. But thou art well now, art thou not?"

"I am much better, I am almost well."

"Thou art well, thou didst not die. Oh, how happy I am!"

A brief silence ensued.

"Eléna?"—Insároff said interrogatively.

"What, my dear one?"

"Tell me, has it not occurred to you that this illness was sent to us as a chastisement?"

Eléna looked seriously at him.

"That thought has occurred to me, Dmítry. But I thought: Why should I be chastised? What duty have I violated, against what have I sinned? Perhaps my conscience is not like that of others, but it was silent; or, perhaps, I am to blame toward thee?—I hinder thee, I hold thee back . . . ."

"Thou art not holding me back, Eléna; we will go together."

"Yes, Dmítry, we will go together, I will follow thee . . . . That is my duty. I love thee . . . . I know no other duty."

"Oh, Eléna!"—said Insároff:—"what invincible chains does thy word lay upon me!"

"Why talk about chains?"—she interposed.—"We are free people. Yes,"—she went on, gazing thoughtfully at the floor, while with one hand she continued to stroke his hair as before,—"I have gone through a great deal of late, of which I had never the least conception! If any one had predicted to me that I, a well-born, well-bred young lady, would leave the house alone, under divers fictitious pretexts, and go whither besides,—to a young man's lodgings!—how enraged I should have been! And all that has come to pass, and I do not feel the slightest indignation. God is my witness that I do not!" she added, and turned toward Insároff.

He gazed at her with such an expression of adoration, that she gently lowered her hand from his hair to his eyes.

"Dmítry!"—she began again,—"of course thou dost not know, but I saw thee yonder, on that dreadful bed,—I saw thee in the claws of death, unconscious . . . ."

"Thou sawest me?"

"Yes."

He remained silent.—"And was Berséneff here?"

She nodded her head.

Insároff bent toward her.—"Oh, Eléna!" he whispered:—"I dare not look at thee."

"Why? Andréi Petróvitch is so kind! I was not ashamed before him. And what have I to be ashamed of? I am ready to tell all the world that I am thine . . . . . And I trust Andréi Petróvitch like a brother."

"He saved me!"—cried Insároff.—"He is the noblest, the best of men!"

"Yes . . . . . And knowest thou, that I am indebted to him for everything? Knowest thou, that he was the first to tell me that thou lovedst me? And if I could reveal all . . . . . Yes, he is a most noble man."

Insároff looked intently at Eléna.—"He is in love with thee, is he not?"

Eléna dropped her eyes.—"He did love me," she said, in a low voice.

Insároff clasped her hand closely.—"Oh, you Russians,"—he said,—"you have hearts of gold! And he—he nursed me, he did not sleep at night . . . . And thou—thou, my angel . . . . No reproach, no wavering . . . . and all this for me, for me! . . . ."

"Yes, yes, all for thee, because thou art beloved. Akh, Dmítry! How strange it is! I think I have already spoken to thee about it,—but never mind, it is pleasant to me to repeat it, and it will be pleasant for thee to hear it,—when I beheld thee for the first time . . . ."

"Why are there tears in thine eyes?"—Insároff interrupted her.

"Tears? In my eyes?"—She wiped her eyes with her handkerchief.—"Oh, the stupid! He does not yet know that people weep for happiness. As I was going to say: When I beheld thee for the first time, I perceived nothing particular in thee, truly. I remember, at first I liked Shúbin much better, although I never loved him; and as for Andréi Petróvitch,—oh! there was a moment when I thought: Can he be the man? But thou—I felt nothing; on the other hand . . . afterward . . . . afterward . . . . thou didst fairly seize my heart with both hands!"

"Spare me!"—said Insároff. He tried to rise, but immediately sank back on the divan.

"What ails thee?" asked Eléna anxiously.

"Nothing. . . . I am still a little weak . . . . This happiness is beyond my strength."

"Then sit quietly. Do not dare to stir, do not get excited,"—she added, shaking her finger at him.—"And why have you taken off your dressing-gown? It is too early for you to put on foppish airs! Sit still, and I will tell you stories. Listen, and be silent. After your illness, it is injurious for you to talk much."

She began to tell him about Shúbin, about Kurnatóvsky, about what she had been doing for the last fortnight,—that, according to the newspapers, war was inevitable, and consequently, as soon as he should be entirely well, he must find means for departure without wasting a moment's

time. . . . She said all this, as she sat by his side, leaning against his shoulder. . . .

He listened to her,—listened, now paling, now flushing . . . . Several times he attempted to stop her, and then he suddenly drew himself up.

"Eléna,"—he said to her, with a strange, harsh sort of voice,—"leave me, go away."

"What,"—she said, with surprise.—"Dost thou feel ill?"—she added quickly.

"No . . . I am all right . . . . but, leave me, please."

"I do not understand thee. Thou art driving me away? . . . What is it thou art doing?"—she said suddenly: he had bent down from the divan almost to the floor, and was pressing his lips to her feet.—"Don't do that, Dmítry . . . . Dmítry . . . ."

He raised himself up, part way.

"Then leave me! Seest thou, Eléna, when I fell ill I did not at once lose consciousness, I knew I was on the verge of destruction; even in my fever, even in my delirium, I was dimly conscious that death was advancing toward me, that I had bidden farewell to life, to thee, to everything, I was parting with hope . . . . and all at once, that revival, that light in the darkness, thou . . . . . thou wert by my side, in my room, ... thy head, thy breath. . . . . This is beyond my strength! I feel that I love thee passionately, I

hear thee calling thyself mine, I can answer for nothing. . . . Go away!"

"Dmítry . . . . " whispered Eléna, and hid her head on his shoulder. Only now did she understand him.

"Eléna,"—he went on,—"I love thee, thou knowest it; I am ready to give my life for thee . . . but why hast thou come to me now, when I am weak, when I am not in control of myself, when all my blood is aflame? . . . Thou art mine, thou sayest . . . . thou lovest me . . . . "

"Dmítry,"—she repeated, all flushed, and pressing herself still more closely to him.

"Eléna, have pity on me—go away! I feel I may die—I cannot endure these attacks . . . . my whole soul longs for thee . . . reflect, death has almost parted us . . . and now thou art here, in my arms . . . . Eléna . . . . "

She trembled all over. . . "Then take me," she whispered, almost inaudibly.

XXIX

Nikolái Artémievitch was striding to and fro in his study, with frowning brows. Shúbin was sitting by the window, and, with one leg thrown over the other, was calmly smoking a cigar.

"Please stop pacing from corner to corner," he said, knocking the ashes from his cigar. "I am still waiting to hear what you have to say, I am watching you—and my neck is tired. Moreover, there is something forced, melodramatic, about your stride."

"You want to do nothing but jest,"—replied Nikolái Artémievitch. "You will not enter into my position, you will not understand that I have become accustomed to that woman, that I am attached to her—in short, that her absence must torture me. Here it is almost December, winter is at the end of our noses. . . . What can she be doing in Revel?"

"She must be knitting stockings . . . for herself; for herself—not for you."

"Laugh away, laugh away; but let me tell you, that I do not know such another woman. Such honesty, such disinterestedness . . . ."

"Has she put in that note for collection?" inquired Shúbin.

"Such disinterestedness,"—repeated Nikolái Artémievitch, raising his voice,—"is wonderful. They tell me that there are a million other women in the world; but I say: Show me that million; show me that million, I say: *ces femmes, qu'on me les montre!* And she does not write,—that is what is deadly!"

"You are as eloquent as Insároff,"—remarked Shúbin:—"but do you know what I would advise you to do?"

"When?"

"When Augustína Christiánovna returns . . . you understand me?"

"Well, yes; what then?"

"When you see her . . . . Do you follow the development of my idea?"

"Well, yes, yes."

"Try to beat her: what will be the result?"

Nikolái Artémievitch turned away in wrath.

"I thought he really would give me some practical advice. But what can one expect from him! An artist, a man devoid of principles . . . ."

"Devoid of principles! Why, they say that your favourite, Mr. Kurnatóvsky, a man with principles, cleaned a hundred rubles out of you yesterday. That is not delicate, you must admit."

"What of it? We were playing a commercial game. Of course, I might have expected

. . . But people are so incapable of appreciating him in this house . . . ."

" That he thought: ' Here goes! ' " put in Shúbin:—" ' Whether he is to be my father-in-law or not, is a matter which is still hidden in the urn of fate, but a hundred rubles are good for a man who does not take bribes.' "

" Father-in-law! What the devil do you mean by being a father-in-law?—*Vous rêvez, mon cher.* Of course, any other girl would have been delighted with such a suitor. Judge for yourself: he 's a dashing, clever man, he has made his own way in the world, he has toiled hard for a livelihood in two governments . . . ."

" In the Government of ****, he led the Governor by the nose,"—remarked Shúbin.

" Very likely. Evidently, that was as it should be. He 's practical, energetic . . . ."

" And plays cards well,"—remarked Shúbin again.

" Well, yes, he does play cards well. But Eléna Nikoláevna . . . . Can she understand? I want to know where is the man who will undertake to understand what she wants? Sometimes she is merry, again she is bored; suddenly, she grows so thin that one does not wish to look at her, and then, all of a sudden, she recovers, and all this without any visible cause . . . . ."

A homely footman entered with a cup of coffee, a cream-jug, and rusks on a tray.

" The father is pleased with the suitor,"—went

on Nikolái Artémievitch, waving a rusk,—"but what does the daughter care about that? That was all right in former, patriarchal times, but now we have changed all that. *Nous avons changé tout ça.* Now a young lady talks with whomsoever she pleases; she goes about Moscow without a lackey, without a maid, as in Paris; and all that is accepted. The other day I asked: 'Where is Eléna Nikoláevna?' I am told, 'She has been pleased to go out.' Whither? No one knows. Is that—proper?"

"Do take your cup, and dismiss the man,"—said Shúbin.—"You yourself say that one should not talk *devant les domestiques,"*—he added in an undertone.

The footman cast a sidelong glance at Shúbin, but Nikolái Artémievitch took his cup, poured himself some cream, and clutched up half a score of rusks.

"What I meant to say," he began, as soon as the servant had left the room,—"is that I am of no account in this house. That 's all. Because, in our day, every one judges by the exterior: one man is empty and stupid, but has a pompous mien,—and he is respected; while another, perhaps, is possessed of talents which might . . . . might be of great service, but owing to his modesty . . . . ."

"Are you a statesman, Nikolínka?" inquired Shúbin, in a very subtle voice.

"Have done with your clownish pranks!" ex-

claimed Nikolái Artémievitch angrily. You forget yourself! Here 's a fresh proof for you that I count for nothing in this house, nothing!"

"Anna Vasílievna persecutes you, poor fellow!" said Shúbin, stretching himself. "Ekh, Nikolái Artémievitch, you and I ought to be ashamed of ourselves! You had better prepare some little gift for Anna Vasílievna. Her birthday comes shortly, and you know how she prizes the smallest token of attention on your part."

"Yes, yes," replied Nikolái Artémievitch hastily:—"I am very much obliged to you for reminding me of it. Of course, of course; without fail. And here, I have a trifle; a little clasp, which I purchased a few days ago at Rosenstrauch's; only, I don't know whether it is suitable?"

"I suppose you bought it for the other one, the resident of Revel?"

"That is . . . I . . . yes . . . I thought . . . ."

"Well, in that case, it certainly is suitable."

Shúbin rose from his chair.

"Where shall we spend the evening, Pável Yakóvlevitch, hey?" Nikolái Artémievitch asked him, looking him amiably in the eye.

"Why, I suppose you are going to the club."

"After the club . . . . after the club."

Again Shúbin stretched himself.

"No, Nikolái Artémievitch, I must work to-

morrow. Some other time."—And he left the room.

Nikolái Artémievitch frowned, paced up and down the room a couple of times, took from a bureau a small velvet case with the "little clasp," and for a long time gazed at it and rubbed it up with his silk handkerchief. Then he sat down in front of the mirror, and began carefully to brush his thick black hair, pompously inclining his head now to the right, now to the left, thrusting his tongue into his cheek, and never taking his eyes from his parting. Some one coughed behind him: he glanced round, and beheld the footman who had brought the coffee.

"Why hast thou come?" he asked him.

"Nikolái Artémievitch!" said the lackey, not without considerable solemnity—"you are our master!"

"I know it: what next?"

"Nikolái Artémievitch, please do not be angry with me; only, as I have been in your grace's service since my youth, it is my duty, out of slavish zeal, to inform you . . . . ."

"Well, what is it?"

The lackey shifted from foot to foot.

"You were pleased to say just now,"—he began,—"that you did not know where Eléna Nikoláevna is pleased to go. I have become acquainted with it."

"What lies art thou telling, fool?"

"I can't help it: only three days ago I saw her entering a certain house."

"Where? what? what house?"

"In the * * * alley, near Povarskáya Street. Not far from here. And I asked the yard-porter. 'What lodgers have you?' says I."

Nikolái Artémievitch began to stamp his feet.

"Hold thy tongue, rascal! How darest thou? . . . Eléna Nikoláevna, in her kindness of heart, is visiting the poor, and thou . . . . Begone, fool!"

The frightened lackey started for the door with a rush.

"Stop!" shouted Nikolái Artémievitch. "What did the yard-porter say?"

"Why, no . . . . thing,—he said nothing. 'A stu . . . student,' says he."

"Hold thy tongue, rascal! Listen, scoundrel: if thou darest to speak of this to any one, even in thy sleep . . . ."

"Have mercy, sir! . . . ."

"Silence! if thou so much as utterest a sound . . . . if any one . . . . if I hear . . . . thou shalt not find refuge from me even under the earth! Dost hear? Take thyself off!"

The lackey vanished.

"O Lord my God! What is the meaning of this?" thought Nikolái Artémievitch, when he found himself alone:—"what was it that blockhead told me? Hey? But I must find out

what house it is, and who lives there. I must go myself. A pretty pass things have come to, upon my word! . . . . *Un laquais! .Quelle humiliation!*"

And repeating aloud, "*Un laquais!*" Nikolái Artémievitch locked up the clasp in his bureau, and betook himself to Anna Vasílievna. He found her in bed, with her cheek in a bandage. But the sight of her sufferings merely irritated him, and he speedily reduced her to tears.

XXX

In the meantime, the storm which had been brewing in the East broke. Turkey declared war on Russia; the date set for the evacuation of the principalities had already passed; the day of the uprising of Sinope was not far distant. The last letters received by Insároff summoned him importunately to his native land. His health was not yet restored: he coughed, felt weak, and had light attacks of fever, but he hardly remained in the house at all. His soul was on fire; he no longer thought of his illness. He was incessantly going about Moscow; he met various persons by stealth; many a time he wrote all night long; he disappeared for days together; he announced to his landlord that he was going away soon, and presented him, in advance, with his simple furniture. Eléna, on her side, was also making preparations to depart. One stormy evening, she was sitting in her own chamber, and as she hemmed a handkerchief she involuntarily listened with sadness to the howling of the wind. Her maid entered, and told her that her papa was in her mamma's bedroom, and requested her to go thither . . . . "Your mamma is crying,"

—she whispered after the departing Eléna,— "and your papa is in a rage . . . ."

Eléna shrugged her shoulders slightly, and entered Anna Vasílievna's bedroom. Nikolái Artémievitch's good-natured wife was half-reclining in a lounging-chair and sniffing at a handkerchief scented with eau de Cologne; he himself was standing by the fireplace, with his coat buttoned up to the throat, in a tall, stiff neckcloth, and with stiffly-starched cuffs, and dimly suggested by his carriage some parliamentary orator. With an oratorical wave of his hand, he motioned his daughter to a chair, and when she, not understanding his gesture, looked inquiringly at him, he said with dignity, but without turning his head: "I beg that you will be seated." (Nikolái Artémievitch addressed his wife as *you* always and his daughter on extraordinary occasions.)

Eléna sat down.

Anna Vasílievna blew her nose tearfully. Nikolái Artémievitch thrust his right hand into the breast of his coat.

"I have summoned you, Eléna Nikoláevna," —he began, after a prolonged silence, "for the purpose of having an explanation with you—or, I had better say, for the purpose of demanding an explanation from you. I am displeased with you,—or, no: that is putting it too mildly; your conduct afflicts, shocks me—me and your mother

. . . . your mother, whom you see here before you."

Nikolái Artémievitch set in action only the bass notes of his voice. Eléna gazed at him in silence, then at Anna Vasílievna, and turned pale.

"There was a time,"—began Nikolái Artémievitch again,—"when daughters did not permit themselves to look down upon their parents,—when the parental authority made the disobedient tremble. That time is past, unfortunately,—so, at least, many persons think: but, believe me, there still exist laws which do not permit . . . . do not permit . . . . in short, laws still exist. I beg that you will direct your attention to this point: laws exist."

"But, papa,"—Eléna was beginning.

"I request that you will not interrupt me. Let us return, in thought, to the past. Anna Vasílievna and I have performed our duty. Anna Vasílievna and I have spared nothing on your education: neither expense nor solicitude. What profit you have drawn from all this solicitude, from all this expenditure—is another question; but I had a right to think . . . Anna Vasílievna and I had a right to think that you would, at least, sacredly preserve those principles of morality which . . . . which we have . . . . which, as our only daughter . . . . *que nous vous avons inculqués*—which we have incul-

cated in you. We had the right to think that no new 'ideas' would touch that, so to speak, stipulated inviolability. And what is the result? I am not now referring to the frivolity inherent in your sex, in your age . . . . but who could have expected that you would so far forget yourself . . . . ."

"Papa,"—said Eléna,—"I know what you want to say. . . . ."

"No, thou dost not know what I want to say!"—shouted Nikolái Artémievitch in a falsetto voice, suddenly abandoning the majesty of his parliamentary demeanour, and his suave dignity of speech, and his bass tones:—"Thou dost not know, audacious chit! . . . ."

"For God's sake, *Nicolas,*" lisped Anna Vasílievna,—"*vous me faites mourir.*"

"Don't tell me that—*que je vous fais mourir,* Anna Vasílievna! you have not the slightest idea what you are about to hear! Prepare yourself for the worst, I warn you!"

Anna Vasílievna was fairly dumfounded.

"No,"—went on Nikolái Artémievitch, turning to Eléna:—"thou dost not know what I want to say to thee!"

"I am to blame before you . . ." she began.

"Hey, at last, then?"

"I am to blame before you,"—went on Eléna, —"in that I did not, long ago confess . . . . ."

"But dost thou know," Nikolái Artémievitch

interrupted her,—"that I can annihilate thee with a single word?"

Eléna raised her eyes to his.

"Yes, madam, with a single word! You need n't look like that!" (He folded his arms on his chest.) "Permit me to ask you, Are you acquainted with a certain house in * * * alley, near Povarskáya Street? Have you visited that house?" (He stamped his foot.) "Answer me, wretched girl, and do not try to deceive me! People, people, lackeys, madam, *de vils laquais,* have seen you going in there to your . . . . ."

Eléna flushed all over, and her eyes began to sparkle.

"I have no occasion to deceive you," she said; "yes, I have visited that house."

"Very fine! you hear, you hear, Anna Vasílievna. And, probably, you know who lives there?"

"Yes, I know: my husband."

Nikolái Artémievitch stared.

"Thy . . . . ."

"My husband,"—repeated Eléna.—"I am married to Dmítry Nikanórovitch Insároff."

"Thou? . . . Married! . . . " Anna Vasílievna articulated with difficulty.

"Yes, mamma. . . . Forgive me! We were married secretly, a fortnight ago."

Anna Vasílievna fell back in her chair; Nikolái Artémievitch retreated a couple of paces.

"Married! To that trumpery fellow, that Montenegrin! The daughter of Nikolái Stákhoff, a member of the ancient hereditary nobility, married to a tramp, to a man of no caste! Without the parental blessing! And dost thou think that I will leave matters thus? that I shall not make complaint? that I shall permit thee . . . that thou . . . . that . . . . I 'll send thee to a convent, and him to the galleys, to the penitentiary battalion! Anna Vasílievna, be so good as to tell her at once that you will deprive her of her inheritance!"

"Nikolái Artémievitch, for God's sake!" moaned Anna Vasílievna.

"And when, in what way, did this take place? Who performed the marriage ceremony for you? Where? My God! What will all our acquaintances, what will everybody say now! And thou, shameless hypocrite, couldst dwell under the parental roof-tree after such a deed! Hast thou not feared a thunderbolt from heaven?"

"Papa,"—said Eléna (she was trembling all over, from head to foot, but her voice was firm), —"you are at liberty to do what you like with me, but you accuse me without cause of shamelessness and hypocrisy. I did not wish . . . . to grieve you any sooner than was necessary; but I would have told you everything, myself, perforce, in a few days, because my husband and I are going away from here next week."

"Going away? Whither?"

"To his native land,—to Bulgaria."

"To the Turks!" cried Anna Vasílievna, and fell in a swoon.

Eléna darted to her mother.

"Away!" roared Nikolái Artémievitch, and seized his daughter by the arm:—"Begone, unworthy one!"

But, at that moment, the bedroom door opened, and a pale head, with glittering eyes, made its appearance; it was the head of Shúbin.

"Nikolái Artémievitch!" he shouted at the top of his voice:—"Augustína Christiánovna has arrived, and summons you to her!"

Nikolái Artémievitch wheeled round in a towering rage, shook his fist at Shúbin, stood still for a moment, then swiftly left the room.

Eléna fell at her mother's feet, and embraced her knees.

Uvár Ivánovitch was lying on his bed. A shirt devoid of collar, with a big stud, encircled his fat neck, and fell in broad, loose folds on his almost feminine breast, leaving a large cypress-wood cross and an amulet disclosed to view. A light quilt covered his vast limbs. A candle burned dimly on the night-stand, beside a jug of home-brewed beer, and at Uvár Ivánovitch's feet, on the bed, sat the dejected Shúbin.

"Yes,"—he was saying thoughtfully,—"she

is married, and preparing to depart. Your nice little nephew kicked up a row, and roared so that everybody in the house could hear him; he locked himself into the bedroom, for the sake of privacy, but not only the lackeys and the maids,—the very coachmen could hear him! Now he is tearing and flinging about, he almost came to blows with me, and he is rushing around nursing his parental malediction, like a bear his sore head; but there 's no force in him. Anna Vasílievna is overwhelmed, but she is far more grieved over her daughter's departure than over her marriage."

Uvár Ivánovitch wiggled his fingers.

"A mother,"—said he:—"well . . . you know . . . ."

"Your nice little nephew,"—pursued Shúbin, "threatens to complain to the Metropolitan, to the Governor-General, to the Minister, but it will end in her departure. Who finds it a cheerful matter to ruin his only daughter! He 'll crow for a while, and then lower his tail."

"They have . . . no right," remarked Uvár Ivánovitch, and took a drink from the jug.

"Exactly, exactly. And what a thundercloud of condemnation, of rumors, of gossip, will arise in Moscow! She was not afraid of them . . . . However, she is above them. She is going away—and whither! it is terrible even to think of it! To what a distance, to what a God-forsaken place! What awaits her there?

I behold her, as it were, leaving a posting-station by night, in a snow-storm, with the temperature thirty degrees below zero. She is parting with her native land, with her family; but I understand her. Whom is she leaving behind her here? Whom has she seen? Kurnatóvskys, and Berséneffs, and the like of us; and they are the best of the lot. Why regret it? One thing is bad; they say that her husband—the devil knows, my tongue can hardly get around that word—they say that Insároff spits blood; that is bad. I saw him the other day; his face was such that one might model Brutus straight from it . . . . . Do you know who Brutus was, Uvár Ivánovitch?"

"Why should n't I know? A man."

"Precisely: 'he was a man.' Yes, a magnificent face, but unhealthy, very unhealthy."

"For fighting . . . it makes no difference," said Uvár Ivánovitch.

"For fighting, it makes no difference, exactly so; you are pleased to express yourself with perfect justice to-day; but for living, it does make a difference. And I suppose he and she wish to live together."

"It 's the way of young people," replied Uvár Ivánovitch.

"Yes, it 's a young, splendid, fearless way. Death, life, struggle, fall, triumph, love, freedom, fatherland . . . . Good, good. God grant

it to every one! That 's quite another thing from sitting in a marsh up to your neck, and trying to assume an air of not caring, when, as a matter of fact, in reality you do care. But there—the strings are stretched taut; ring out, so that all the world may hear, or break!"

Shúbin dropped his head on his breast.

"Yes," he went on after a long silence,—"Insároff is worthy of her. But what nonsense! No one is worthy of her. Insároff . . . . Insároff . . . . Why this false submission? Well, let us admit that he is young, he will stand up for himself, although, so far, he has done just the same as the rest of us sinners, and it can't be possible, can it, that we are such complete trash? Come now, take me, for instance,—am I trash, Uvár Ivánovitch? Has God denied me every good quality? Has He bestowed on me no abilities, no talents whatever? Who knows, perhaps the name of Pável Shúbin will become a glorious name in the course of time? Here, a copper coin is lying on your table. Who knows, perhaps, some time or other, a century hence, that coin may become part of a statue of Pável Shúbin, erected in his honour by a grateful posterity?"

Uvár Ivánovitch propped himself on his elbow, and riveted his eyes on the artist, who had talked himself into a fever-heat.

"'T is a long cry,"—he said, at last, twiddling

his fingers, as usual: "it is a question of other people; but thou . . . seest thou? . . . talkest about thyself."

"O great philosopher of the Russian land!" exclaimed Shúbin.—"Every word of yours is pure gold, and not to me, but to you, should the statue be erected, and I shall set about it myself. Here now, just as you are lying at the present moment, in this pose,—as to which one cannot say whether it contains most of laziness or of strength—just so will I cast you. You have staggered me with your just reproof for my egotism and my self-conceit! Yes! yes! there 's no use in talking about one's self; there 's no use in bragging. There is no one, as yet, among us; there are no men, look where you will. All are either small fry, or squabblers, petty Hamlets, cannibals, either underground gloom and thicket, or bullies, empty triflers, and drumsticks! And there 's still another sort of men for you: they have studied themselves with disgraceful minuteness; they are incessantly feeling the pulse of their every sensation, and reporting to themselves. 'Here,' say they, 'is what I feel; this is what I think.' A useful, practical occupation! No, if we had any able men, that young girl, that sensitive soul, would not be leaving us, would not have slipped from us, like a fish into the water! What does it mean, Uvár

Ivánovitch? When is our time coming? When shall we bring forth men in our land?"

"Give us time,"—replied Uvár Ivánovitch,—"they will come."

"They will come? O thou soil! thou black-earth force! thou hast said: 'They will come?' Behold, I shall put thy words on record. But why do you extinguish your candle?"

"I 'm sleepy,—good-bye."

XXXI

Shúbin spoke the truth. The unexpected news of Eléna's marriage had almost killed Anna Vasílievna. She took to her bed. Nikolái Artémievitch required of her, that she should not admit her daughter within her sight; he seemed to rejoice at the opportunity to display himself in his complete importance as master of the house, in all the powers of the head of the family: he blustered and thundered uninterruptedly at the servants, constantly adding: "I 'll show you who I am, I 'll let you know—just wait!" As long as he remained in the house, Anna Vasílievna did not see Eléna, and contented herself with the presence of Zóya, who waited upon her with great assiduity, and meanwhile thought to herself: "*Diesen Insároff vorziehen—und wem?*" But no sooner did Nikolái Artémievitch absent himself (and this happened with tolerable frequency: Augustína Christiánovna really had returned), than Eléna presented herself before her mother,—and the latter gazed at her long, silently, with tears in her eyes. This mute reproach pierced Eléna's heart more deeply than any other; she did not feel repen-

tance then, but profound, infinite compunction, akin to repentance.

"Mamma, dear mamma!"—she kept repeating, as she kissed her hands: "what could I do? I am not to blame, I fell in love with him, I could not act otherwise. Blame fate: it brought me into connection with a man whom papa does not like, who will take me away from you."

"Okh!" Anna Vasílievna interrupted her: —"do not remind me of that. When I remember where it is that thou wishest to go, my heart fairly sinks in my breast!"

"Dear mamma," replied Eléna,—"console thyself at least with this, that things might be still worse: I might have died."

"But, as it is, I have no hope of ever seeing thee again. Either thou wilt end thy life yonder, somewhere, in a wigwam" (Anna Vasílievna pictured Bulgaria to herself as something in the nature of the Siberian marshy fens), "or I shall not survive the separation . . . . ."

"Do not say that, my kind mamma; we shall see each other again, God willing. But there are towns in Bulgaria, just like those here."

"Towns, indeed! War is in progress there now; now, I think, wherever one may go, they are firing cannon . . . . Art thou preparing to start soon?"

"Yes . . . if only papa . . . . He means

to lodge a complaint, he threatens to separate us."

Anna Vasílievna raised her eyes to heaven.

"No, Lénotchka, he will not lodge a complaint. I myself would not have consented, on any terms whatsoever, to this marriage, I would sooner have died; but what is done cannot be undone, and I will not allow my daughter to be disgraced."

Several days passed thus. At last Anna Vasílievna plucked up her courage, and one evening she shut herself up alone with her husband in her bedroom. Everybody in the house became silent, and lent an ear. At first, nothing was audible; then Nikolái Artémievitch's voice began to boom out, then a wrangle ensued, shouts arose, the listeners even thought that they heard groans. . . . . Shúbin, in company with Zóya and the maids, was already on the point of going to the rescue, but the uproar in the bedroom began gradually to diminish, lapsed into conversation, and ceased. Only from time to time did faint sobs resound—then these came to an end. The key rattled, the squeak of a bureau being opened resounded. . . . The door opened, and Nikolái Artémievitch made his appearance. He stared morosely at all whom he encountered, and betook himself to his club; but Anna Vasílievna summoned Eléna to her, embraced her warmly, and, shedding bitter tears, said:

"Everything is settled, he will not make a scandal, and nothing now hinders thee from going away . . . . from abandoning us."

"Will you permit Dmítry to come and thank you,"—Eléna asked her mother, as soon as the latter had regained a little composure.

"Wait, my darling; I cannot see the man who is separating us yet. There is plenty of time before your departure."

"Before our departure," repeated Eléna sadly.

Nikolái Artémievitch had consented "not to make a scandal"; but Anna Vasílievna did not tell her daughter what a price he had set upon his consent. She did not tell her that she had promised to pay all his debts, and had given him in hand one thousand rubles. Over and above this, he had informed Anna Vasílievna, with decision, that he did not wish to meet Insároff, whom he continued to call a Montenegrin; and when he arrived at his club, he began, without the slightest necessity for it, to talk with his partner, a retired general, about Eléna's marriage. "Have you heard," said he, with feigned carelessness,—"that my daughter, owing to her great erudition, has married some sort of student?" The general looked at him through his spectacles, muttered, "H'm!" and asked him what was his play.

XXXII

But the day of departure was drawing near. November was already past; the last days of grace had expired. Insároff had long ago completed all his preparations, and was burning with the desire to tear himself away from Moscow as speedily as possible. And the doctor urged him to haste. "You require a warm climate," he said to him; "you will not recover your health here." Eléna was overcome with impatience also; Insároff's pallor, his thinness, troubled her. She often gazed with involuntary alarm at his altered features. Her position in her father's house had become intolerable. Her mother wailed over her, as over a corpse, while her father treated her with scornful coldness: the approaching parting secretly tortured him also, but he regarded it as his duty, the duty of an injured father, to conceal his feelings, his weakness. At last, Anna Vasílievna expressed a wish to see Insároff. He was brought to her quietly, by the back door. When he entered her room, she was unable, for a long time, to speak to him, she could not even bring herself to look at him;

he sat down beside her arm-chair, and with calm respect awaited her first word. Eléna sat there also, holding her mother's hand in hers. At last, Anna Vasílievna raised her eyes, said, "God is your judge, Dmítry Nikanórovitch . . . " and stopped short: the reproaches died on her lips.

"Why, you are ill,"—she cried:—"Eléna, he is ill!"

"I have been ill, Anna Vasílievna," replied Insároff,—"and I have not quite recovered my health yet; but I hope that my native air will set me eventually on my feet."

"Yes . . . Bulgaria," stammered Anna Vasílievna, and thought: "My God, a Bulgarian, a dying man, a voice as hollow as though it came from a cask, eyes sunk in his head; a regular skeleton, his coat hangs on him as though it were made for some one else; yellow as camomile—and she is his wife, she loves him . . . . why, this is a dream! . . ." But she immediately recovered herself.—"Dmítry Nikanórovitch,"—she said:—"is it indispensably—indispensably necessary that you should go?"

"Yes, Anna Vasílievna."

Anna Vasílievna looked at him.

"Okh, Dmítry Nikanórovitch, God grant that you may never experience what I am now experiencing! . . . But you will promise me to take good care of her, to love her . . . . You shall never suffer want as long as I am living!"

Tears choked her voice. She opened her arms, and Eléna and Insároff fell on her breast.

THE fatal day arrived at last. It was arranged that Eléna should say good-bye to her parents at home, and should set out on the journey from Insároff's lodgings. The departure was appointed for twelve o'clock. A quarter of an hour before that time, Berséneff arrived. He had supposed that he would find at Insároff's lodgings his fellow-countrymen who would wish to see him off; but they had all already gone on ahead; the two mysterious persons with whom the reader is already acquainted (they had served as witnesses at Insároff's wedding) had also departed. The tailor greeted "the kind gentleman" with a bow; he had been drinking heavily, it must have been from grief, or, possibly, from joy that he was to get the furniture; his wife speedily led him away. Everything was already in order in the room; a trunk, corded with a rope, stood on the floor. Berséneff fell into thought: many memories passed through his soul.

It was long after twelve o'clock, and the postilion had already brought the horses to the door, but "the young pair" still did not make their appearance. At last, hurried footsteps became audible on the stairs, and Eléna entered, accompanied by Insároff and Shúbin. Eléna's eyes

were red: she had left her mother lying in a swoon; their parting had been extremely painful. It was more than a week since Eléna had seen Berséneff: of late, he had gone seldom to the Stákhoffs. She had not expected to meet him, exclaimed, "You! thanks!" and threw herself on his neck; Insároff also embraced him. A harrowing silence ensued. What could those three persons say, what were those three hearts feeling? Shúbin comprehended the imperative necessity of putting an end to this anguish by a living sound, a word.

"Our trio has assembled together once more," —he said—"for the last time! Let us submit to the decree of fate, let us bear in mind the good times that are past, and enter upon the new life with God's blessing! 'God bless you on your distant road,'" he struck up, and stopped. He suddenly felt ashamed and awkward. It is a sin to sing where a corpse is lying; and, at that moment, in that room, that past died to which he had alluded, the past of the people who were assembled there. It died for the regeneration of a new life, let us assume; . . . but, nevertheless, it died.

"Well, Eléna," began Insároff, addressing his wife,—"everything is ready, I think. Everything is paid for, packed. Nothing remains to be done, except to carry out this trunk. Landlord!"

The landlord entered the room, accompanied by his wife and daughter. He listened, reeling slightly as he did so, to Insároff's order, threw the trunk on his shoulders, and ran swiftly down the stairs, clattering his boots as he went.

"Now, according to the Russian custom, we must sit down," remarked Insároff.

They all seated themselves: Berséneff placed himself on the little old couch; Eléna sat down beside him; the landlady and her little daughter squatted down on the threshold. All became silent; all were smiling in a constrained way, and no one knew why he was smiling; each one wanted to say something by way of good-bye, and each one (with the exception, of course, of the landlady and her daughter: they merely stared with all their might)—each felt that at such moments it is permissible to say nothing but commonplaces, that any significant, or witty, or even cordial word would be, somehow, out of place, would almost have a false ring. Insároff was the first to rise to his feet and begin to cross himself . . . . "Farewell, our dear little room!" he exclaimed.

Kisses resounded, the loud but cold kisses of parting, good wishes for the journey half uttered, promises to write, the last, half-stifled words of farewell . . . .

Eléna, all bathed in tears, had already taken her seat in the travelling-sledge; Insároff was

carefully tucking the lap-robe around her feet; Shúbin, Berséneff, the landlord, his wife, his little daughter with the inevitable kerchief on her head, the yard-porter, a strange artisan in a striped kaftan—were all standing on the front steps, when, suddenly, into the courtyard dashed an elegant sledge, drawn by a high-stepping trotter, and from the sledge, shaking the snow from the collar of his coat, sprang out Nikolái Artémievitch.

"I have found you still here, thank God!" he exclaimed, and hurried to the travelling-sledge.—"Here, Eléna, is our last parental blessing for thee,"—he said, bending down under the hood, and pulling from the pocket of his coat a small holy picture, sewn into a velvet bag, he put it round her neck. She burst out sobbing, and began to kiss his hands, and in the meantime his coachman drew out from the front part of the sledge a bottle of champagne and three glasses.

"Come!" said Nikolái Artémievitch,—but his own tears were fairly trickling down on the beaver collar of his coat,—"we must give you a send-off . . . and wish . . . ." he began to pour out the champagne; his hands shook, the foam rose over the rim and dripped on the snow. He took one glass, and gave the other two to Eléna and Insároff, who had already taken his place by her side.—"God grant you . . . " be-

gan Nikolái Artémievitch, and could not finish his sentence—and drank off his wine; they also drank theirs.—"Now it is your turn, gentlemen," he said, addressing Shúbin and Berséneff, —but at that moment the postilion started his horses. Nikolái Artémievitch ran along by the side of the sledge. "See that thou writest to us,"—he said in a broken voice. Eléna thrust out her head, said, "Good-bye, papa, Andréi Petróvitch, Pável Yakóvlevitch; good-bye, all; good-bye, Russia!" and threw herself back. The postilion flourished his whip and whistled; the travelling-sledge turned to the right after it had passed the gate, its runners squeaking as it did so, and vanished.

XXXIII

It was a brilliant April day. Along the broad lagoon which separates Venice from the narrow strip of alluvial sea-sand called the Lido, a sharp-beaked gondola was skimming along, rocking in cadence at every surge which fell on the gondolier's long oar. Beneath its low roof, on soft leather cushions, sat Eléna and Insároff.

Eléna's features had not altered much since the day of her departure from Moscow; but their expression had become different: it was more thoughtful and stern, and her eyes looked forth more boldly. Her whole body had blossomed out, and her hair seemed to lie in more splendid and luxuriant masses along her white brow and her rosy cheeks. Only in her lips, when she was not smiling, there was expressed, by a barely perceptible fold, the presence of a secret, ever-present anxiety. The expression of Insároff's face, on the other hand, had remained the same as of yore, but his features had undergone a cruel change. He had grown haggard and old, he had grown pale and bent; he coughed almost incessantly, with a short, dry cough; and his sunken eyes shone with a strange glare.

On the road from Russia, Insároff had lain ill for nearly two months at Vienna, and only at the end of March had he arrived with his wife at Venice: thence he hoped to make his way through Zara to Servia and Bulgaria; all other roads were closed to him. War was already raging on the Danube,—England and France had declared war on Russia,—all the Slavonic lands were seething and preparing to rise in revolt.

The gondola landed on the inner edge of the Lido. Eléna and Insároff wended their way along the narrow sandy path, planted with consumptive little trees (they are planted every year, and every year they die), to the outer edge of the Lido, to the sea.

They strolled along the shore. The Adriatic rolled before them its dull-blue waves; they were foaming, hissing, running up on the shore, and flowing back, leaving behind them on the sand tiny shells and fragments of seaweed.

"What a melancholy place!" remarked Eléna. "I 'm afraid it is too cold for thee, but I can guess why thou hast wished to come hither."

"Cold!" returned Insároff, with a swift but bitter laugh. "A pretty soldier I shall be, if I am to fear the cold. And I have come hither . . . I will tell thee why. I gaze at this sea, and it seems to me that from here my native land is nearer. It lies yonder, thou knowest,"—he

added, stretching out his hand toward the East. —"And the wind is blowing from that direction."

"Is not this wind bringing in the vessel which thou art expecting?" said Eléna:—"yonder is a sail gleaming white,—can that be it?"

Insároff gazed out on the distant sea, in the direction indicated by Eléna.

"Renditch promised that he would arrange everything for us in the course of a week," he remarked. "I think we can rely upon him . . . . Hast thou heard, Eléna?" he added, with sudden animation:—"they say that the poor Dalmatian fishermen have contributed their lead sinkers—thou knowest, those weights which make the net fall to the bottom—for bullets! They had no money, and their only means of livelihood is their fishing; but they joyfully surrendered their last resource, and now they are starving. What a race!"

"*Aufgepasst!*" shouted an arrogant voice behind them. The dull trampling of horses' hoofs resounded, and an Austrian officer, in a short grey tunic and a green military cap, galloped past them . . . . They barely managed to get out of the way.

Insároff stared gloomily after him.

"He is not to blame,"—said Eléna,—"thou knowest, they have no other place here where they can ride."

"He is not to blame,"—returned Insároff,—"but he has set my blood to boiling with his shout, his moustache, his cap, with his whole appearance. Let us go back."

"Yes, let us go back, Dmítry. Besides, it really is windy here. Thou didst not take care of thyself after thy Moscow illness, and didst pay for it in Vienna. Thou must be more careful now."

Insároff made no reply, but the same bitter sneer as before flitted across his lips.

"Let us have a row on the Canal Grande, shall we not?"—went on Eléna. "For during all the time we have been here, we have never yet had a good look at Venice. And let us go to the theatre this evening: I have two tickets for a box. We will devote this day to each other, we will forget politics, war, everything, we will know only one thing: that we are living, breathing, thinking together, that we are united forever . . . . . Shall we?"

"Thou wishest it, Eléna,"—replied Insároff,—"consequently, I wish it also."

"I knew it,"—remarked Eléna, with a smile.—"Come along, come along."

They returned to the gondola, seated themselves in it, and ordered the man to row them, in a leisurely way, along the Canal Grande.

Any one who has not seen Venice in April can hardly be said to be acquainted with all the

indescribable charms of that enchanted city. The mildness and softness of spring become Venice, as the brilliant summer sun becomes magnificent Genoa, as the gold and purple of autumn become the grand old city,—Rome. Like the spring, the beauty of Venice touches and arouses the desire: it pains and torments the inexperienced heart, like the promise of a non-enigmatic but mysterious happiness near at hand. Everything in it is bright, comprehensible, and everything is enwrapped in a dreamy haze of a sort of love-stricken silence: everything in it holds its peace, and everything breathes a welcome; everything in it is feminine, beginning with its very name: not for nothing has to it alone been given the title of "The Beautiful." The huge masses of the palaces and churches stand light and splendid, like the beautiful dream of a young god; there is something fabulous, something enchantingly strange in the green-grey gleam and the silken play of hues of the dumb water in the canals, in the noiseless flight of the gondolas, in the absence of harsh city sounds, of coarse pounding, rattling, and uproar. "Venice is dying, Venice is deserted," its inhabitants say to you; but perchance all she needs is this very last charm, the charm of fading in the very bloom and triumph of her beauty. He who has not seen her, does not know her: neither Canaletto nor

Guardi—not to mention the more modern artists—is capable of reproducing that silvery tenderness of the air, that fleeting and nearlying distance, that wonderful combination of the most elegant outlines and melting beauties. It is useless for the man who has ended his career, who has been broken by life, to visit Venice: it will be bitter to him, like the memory of unfulfilled dreams of his earliest days; but it will be sweet for him in whom the forces are still seething, who feels himself fortunate; let him bring his happiness beneath her enchanted sky, and no matter how radiant it may be, she will gild it still more with her never-fading aureole. The gondola in which sat Insároff and Eléna floated softly past the Riva dei Schiavoni, the Palace of the Doges, the Piazzetta, and entered the Canal Grande. On both sides stretched marble palaces; they appeared to be gliding softly past, hardly affording the glance an opportunity to embrace and comprehend their beauties. Eléna felt profoundly happy; in the azure of her heaven one dark cloud had hung—and it had departed: Insároff was much better that day. They went as far as the sharp arch of the Rialto, and turned back. Eléna was afraid of the cold in the churches, for Insároff; but she remembered the Accademia delle Belle Arti, and ordered the gondolier to proceed thither. They had soon made the round of all the halls

of that small museum. Being neither connoisseurs nor dilettanti, they did not pause before every picture, they did not force themselves: a sort of brilliant cheerfulness had unexpectedly taken possession of them. Everything suddenly seemed to them very amusing. (Children are familiar with that feeling.) To the great scandal of three English visitors, Eléna laughed aloud, until tears came, over Tintoretto's "Saint Mark" leaping down from heaven into the water, like a frog, to the rescue of a tortured slave; on his side, Insároff went into ecstasies over the back and calves of the energetic man in the green mantle who stands in the foreground of Titian's "Ascension," and raises his hand after the Madonna; on the other hand, that same Madonna, a beautiful robust woman calmly and majestically ascending to the bosom of God the Father, impressed both Insároff and Eléna; they liked also the severe and holy picture of the old man Cima da Conegliano. On emerging from the academy, they once more glanced round at the Englishmen, with long, rabbit's teeth and drooping side-whiskers, who were walking behind them,—and broke out laughing; they caught sight of their gondolier with his bob-tailed jacket and short trousers,—and laughed; they saw a huckstress with a little knot of grey hair on the crown of her head,—and laughed harder than ever; at last, they looked one an-

other in the face,—and roared with laughter; and as soon as they had taken their seats in the gondola, they clasped each other's hands very, very tight. They reached the hotel, ran to their room, and ordered dinner to be served. Their merriment did not desert them even at table. They helped each other to food, they drank to the health of their Moscow friends, they clapped their hands at the cameriere for the savoury dish of fish, and kept demanding of him live *frutti di mare;* the cameriere shrugged his shoulders and bowed, but when he left the room he shook his head, and even whispered with a sigh: "*Poveretti!*" ("Poor things!") After dinner they went to the theatre.

At the theatre one of Verdi's operas was being played, a decidedly commonplace affair, to tell the truth, but one which had already managed to make the round of all the stages in Europe, and is well known to us Russians—"Traviata." The season in Venice was over, and none of the singers rose above the level of mediocrity; each one shrieked with all his might. The part of *Violetta* was sung by a petty artist who had no reputation, and, judging by the coldness of the audience toward her, she was not a favourite, although not devoid of talent. She was a young, not very pretty, black-eyed girl, with a voice which was not quite even and already cracked. Her costume was motley and bad to

the point of absurdity: a red net covered her hair, her gown of faded blue satin compressed her bosom, thick undressed kid gloves reached to her sharp elbows; and how was she, the daughter of some Bergamo shepherd, to know how the demi-mondaines of Paris dress! And she did not know how to carry herself on the stage; but there was a great deal of truth and artless simplicity in her acting, and she sang with that peculiar passion of expression and rhythm of which Italians alone are capable. Eléna and Insároff sat alone in a dark box, close to the stage; the frolicsome mood which had come over them in the Accademia delle Belle Arti had not yet passed off. When the father of the unhappy young man who had fallen into the toils of the temptress made his appearance on the stage, in a greenish-grey dress-suit and a rumpled white wig, opened his mouth askew, and, seized in advance with stage-fright, emitted a mournful bass tremolo, both of them came near bursting with laughter . . . . . But *Violetta's* acting affected them.

"They hardly applaud that poor girl at all," said Eléna,—"but I prefer her a thousand times over to any self-confident, second-rate celebrity, who would put on airs, and writhe, and strive after effect. Apparently, this one does not take it as a jest herself; see, she does not perceive the audience."

Insároff leaned on the edge of the box, and gazed intently at *Violetta*.

"Yes,"—he muttered,—"she is not jesting: she reeks of death."

Eléna held her peace.

The third act began. The curtain rose . . . . . Eléna shuddered at sight of the bed, of the curtains hung about it, of the medicine-bottles, of the shaded lamp . . . She recalled the recent past . . . . "And the future? And the present?" flashed through her mind. As though expressly in reply to the simulated cough of the singer, Insároff's dull, unfeigned cough rang out in the box . . . . . Eléna shot a stealthy glance at him, and immediately imparted to her features a tranquil, composed expression. Insároff understood her, and he himself began to smile, and almost to hum an accompaniment to the singing.

But he soon stopped. *Violetta's* acting grew better and better, more and more free. She rejected everything irrelevant, everything that was not necessary, and *found herself*: rare and loftiest happiness of the artist! She suddenly crossed the line which it is impossible to define, but on the farther side of which dwells beauty. The audience was startled, amazed. The homely girl with the cracked voice was beginning to get them into her hands, to take possession of them. And the singer's voice no longer sounded

cracked: it had warmed up and grown strong. *Alfredo* made his appearance; *Violetta's* joyful cry almost aroused that storm whose name is *fanatismo,* and in the presence of which all our Northern howls are as nothing . . . . A moment more—and the audience subsided. The duet began, the best number in the opera, in which the composer has succeeded in expressing all the regrets of madly wasted youth, the last struggle of desperate and impotent love. Carried away, swept on by the breath of general sympathy, with tears of artistic joy and of genuine suffering in her eyes, the songstress surrendered herself to the flood which had raised her on its crest, her face became transfigured, and in the presence of suddenly approaching death, with an outburst of entreaty which reached to heaven, the words were wrung from her: "*Lascia mi vivere . . . morir si giovane!*" ("Let me live . . . to die so young!"), and the whole theatre pealed with the applause of frenzied clapping and rapturous shouts.

Eléna had turned cold all over. She began gently to seek with her hand the hand of Insároff, found it, and clasped it tightly. He returned her pressure; but she did not look at him, neither did he look at her. This pressure did not resemble the one with which, a few hours earlier, they had greeted each other in the gondola.

They rowed to their hotel along the Canal Grande again. Night had already set in,—the bright, soft night. The same palaces stretched forth to meet them, but they seemed different. Those of them which were illuminated by the moon shone golden white, and in that very whiteness the details of the decorations and the outlines of windows and balconies seemed to disappear; they stood out more distinctly on the buildings flooded with the light mist of the level shadow. The gondolas, with their tiny red lights, seemed to glide along more inaudibly and swiftly than ever; mysteriously gleamed their steel beaks, mysteriously did the oars rise and fall on the troubled ripples like tiny silver fishes; here and there, the gondoliers uttered brief, not loud cries (they never sing nowadays); almost no other sounds were audible. The hotel where Insároff and Eléna were living was on the Riva dei Schiavoni; before reaching it, they left the gondola, and walked several times around the Square of San Marco beneath the arcade, where, in front of the tiny cafés, a multitude of holiday-makers was thronging. There is something peculiarly agreeable about walking alone, with a beloved being, in a strange city, among strangers: everything seems most beautiful and significant, one wishes everybody good, and peace, and the same happiness wherewith one is one's self filled. But Eléna could no longer give herself

up without anxiety to the consciousness of her happiness: her heart, shaken by recent impressions, could not recover its composure; and Insároff, as they passed the Palace of the Doges, pointed, in silence, to the mouths of the Austrian cannon, peeping out from beneath the low-browed arches, and pulled his hat down over his eyes. Besides, he felt fatigued,—and, bestowing a last glance on the Church of San Marco, on its domes, where, beneath the rays of the moon spots of phosphorescent light were kindled on the bluish leads, they slowly wended their way homeward.

The windows of their little chamber looked out on the broad lagoon which extends from the Riva dei Schiavoni to the Giudecca. Almost directly opposite their hotel rose the sharp-pointed tower of San Giorgio; on the right, high in the air, glittered the golden globe of the Dogana; and decked out like bride stood the most beautiful of churches, the Redentore of Palladius; on the left the masts and yards of ships, the smoke-stacks of steamers, were outlined in black; here and there, like a huge wing, hung a half-reefed sail, the pennants barely stirring. Insároff seated himself at the window, but Eléna did not permit him to enjoy the view for long; fever suddenly made its appearance, and a sort of devouring weakness seized upon him. She put him to bed, and waiting until he

fell asleep, she softly returned to the window. Oh, how still and caressing was the night, what dovelike gentleness did the azure air breathe forth, how ought every suffering, every sorrow, to hold its peace and lapse into slumber beneath these holy innocent rays! "Oh, my God!" thought Eléna,—"why does death exist, why is there parting, illness, tears? or why this beauty, this delightful feeling of hope, why the soothing consciousnss of a sure refuge, of deathless protection? What means this smiling, benevolent heaven, this happy, resting earth? Can it be that this is only in us, and that outside of us is eternal cold and silence? Can it be that we are alone . . . . alone . . . . while yonder, everywhere, in all those impenetrable abysses and depths,—everything, everything is alien to us? Why then this yearning for and delight in prayer?" (*"Morir si giovane!"* resounded in her soul.) . . . . "Can it be, that it is impossible to implore, to bring back happiness? . . . O God! can it be, that it is impossible to believe in a miracle?" She bowed her head on her clasped hands. "Is it ended?" she whispered. "Can it be that it is at an end! I have been happy, not minutes, not hours, not whole days—no, whole weeks in succession. And by what right?" Her happiness frightened her. "And what if it cannot be?" she thought. "What if this is not to be had without paying for it? For it has been hea-

ven . . . . and we mortals, poor, sinful mortals . . . . *Morir si giovane!* . . . O, dark spectre, begone! not for me alone is his life necessary!

"But what if this is—a punishment?"—she thought again; "what if we must now pay the full price for our fault? My conscience held its peace, it is silent now, but is that any proof of innocence? O God, can we have been so very wicked? Can it be that Thou, who hast created this night, this sky, wilt chastise us for having loved? And if it be so, if he be guilty, if I am guilty,"—she added, in an involuntary outburst,—"then grant, O God, that he may die, that we may both die, at least an honourable, a glorious death—yonder, in the fields of his fatherland, but not here, not in this obscure room!

"And how about the grief of my poor, lonely mother?" she asked herself, and became confused, and found no reply to her own question. Eléna did not know that the happiness of every mortal is founded on the unhappiness of another, that even his advantage and comfort demand—as a stature demands a pedestal—the disadvantage and discomfort of others.

"Renditch!" muttered Insároff in his sleep.

Eléna went to him on tiptoe, bent over him, and wiped the perspiration from his brow. He tossed about a little on his pillow, and quieted down.

She returned to the window, and again meditations engrossed her. She began to persuade herself, and assure herself that there was no cause for alarm. She even felt ashamed of her weakness. "Can there be any danger? Is not he better?" she whispered. "Why, if we had not been to the theatre to-night, all this would never have entered my mind." At that moment she espied, high above the water, a white sea-gull; some fisherman had, probably, frightened it, and it was soaring silently, with uneven flight, as though looking out for a place where it could alight. "There now, if it flies hither," thought Eléna, "it will be a good sign." . . . . The sea-gull circled slowly in one spot, folded its wings, and, as though it had been shot, fell, with a pitiful cry, somewhere far away, on a dark ship. Eléna shuddered, and then felt ashamed for having shuddered. And, without undressing, she lay down on the bed beside Insároff, who was breathing fast and heavily.

XXXIV

Insároff awoke late, with a dull pain in his head, with a feeling, as he expressed it, of horrible weakness all over his body. Nevertheless, he rose.

"Renditch has not come?" was his first question.

"Not yet," replied Eléna, and gave him the last number of the *Osservatore Triestino,* in which a great deal was said about the war, about the Slavonic lands, about the principalities. Insároff began to read; she busied herself with preparing coffee for him . . . . Some one knocked at the door.

"Renditch," thought both of them, but the person who had knocked said in Russian: "May I come in?" Eléna and Insároff exchanged a glance of astonishment, and, without waiting for their answer, there entered the room a foppishly-attired man with a small, pointed face and bold little eyes. He was beaming all over, as though he had just won a huge sum of money or had heard a pleasing piece of news.

Insároff half-rose from his chair.

"You do not recognise me,"—began the stranger, advancing to him in a free and easy manner, and bowing amiably to Eléna.—"Lupoyároff, you remember? We met in Moscow, at the E . . . s."

"Yes, at the E . . . s," said Insároff.

"Of course, of course! I beg that you will present me to your wife. Madame, I have always cherished a profound respect for Dmítry Vasílievitch . . . . "—(he corrected himself): "Nikanór Vasílievitch,—and am very happy that, at last, I have the honour of making your acquaintance. Just imagine," he went on, turning to Insároff—"I learned only last night that you were here. I, also, am stopping in this hotel. What a city this Venice is—poetry itself, and that 's all there is to it! There 's one frightful thing about it: these cursed Austrians at every step!—I can't abide the Austrians! By the way, have you heard that a decisive battle has taken place on the Danube: three hundred Turkish officers have been killed, Silistria has been captured, Servia has already declared herself independent,—you, as a patriot, ought to be in raptures, ought n't you? The Slavonic blood in me is fairly boiling! But I would advise you to be extremely cautious; I am convinced that you are being watched. The spying here is awful! yesterday a suspicious sort of man approached me and asked: 'Are you a Russian?'

I told him I was a Dane. . . . But you must be ill, my dearest Nikanór Vasílievitch. You ought to take a course of treatment; madame, you ought to doctor your husband . . . . Yesterday, I was running about the palaces and churches like a madman—you have been in the Palace of the Doges, of course? What wealth everywhere! Especially that great hall, and the Place of Marino Faliero; there it stands: *decapitati pro criminibus.* I have been in the famous prisons: that 's where my soul was troubled—I have always been fond—as perhaps you will remember—of occupying myself with social problems, and have rebelled against the aristocracy—that 's where I would have taken the defenders of the aristocracy: to those prisons; justly did Byron say: ' I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs '; however, he was an aristocrat too. I always was for progress. The young generation is all for progress. But how about the Anglo-French? Let us see whether they will accomplish much: Bustrapá and Palmerston. Palmerston has become Prime Minister, you know. No,—whatever you may say, a Russian usurer is no joke. That Bustrapá is a frightful scoundrel! I 'll give you Victor Hugo's ' Les Châtiments ' if you would like it—it 's wonderful! *' L'Avenir le gendarme de Dieu '* is rather boldly put—but it 's strong, strong. Prince Vyázemsky also said well: ' Europe keeps reiterating: Bash-Kadyk

Lar,[1] never taking its eyes from Sinope!' I love poetry. I also have Prud'hon's last book, I have everything. I don't know how you feel about it, but I am glad of the war,—if only they don't order me home, for I am planning to go from here to Florence—to Rome: it 's impossible to go to France—so I am thinking of going to Spain —the women are wonderful there, they say, only there 's a lot of poverty and insects. I would take a flying trip to California,—we Russians can do everything without an effort,—only, I promised an editor that I would study in detail the question of commerce in the Mediterranean. It is not an interesting subject, you will say, it is a special subject, but we need—we need specialists, we have philosophised enough, and now we must have practice, practice. . . . But you are very ill, Nikanór Vasílievitch, perhaps I am tiring you; but never mind, I will stay a little longer . . . . . ."

And Lupoyároff continued to chatter on in the same strain for a good while longer, and when he went away he promised to come again.

Exhausted by the unexpected visit, Insároff lay down on the couch.—"There,"—he said, with a glance at Eléna,—"there 's our young generation for you! Some of them put on airs

[1] Near this settlement in the Government of Kars, in November, 1853, a force of ten thousand Russian troops won a brilliant victory over a force of thirty-six thousand Turks. Sinope was the scene of another victory in the same year.—TRANSLATOR.

of dignity and show off, but in their souls they are just such empty whistlers as that gentleman."

Eléna made no reply to her husband: at that moment, she was much more disquieted over Insároff's feebleness than by the condition of the rising generation in Russia. . . . She seated herself by his side, and took up her work. He closed his eyes, and lay motionless, all pale and gaunt. Eléna glanced at his sharply outlined profile, at his drawn hands, and a sudden terror gripped her heart.

"Dmítry . . . ." she began.

He started.—"Well, has Renditch come?"

"Not yet . . . . but thou hast fever, thou really art not quite well, shall not I send for a doctor? What thinkest thou?"

"That gabbler has alarmed thee. It is not necessary. I will rest a little, and it will all pass off. After dinner, we will go out again . . . . somewhere."

Two hours passed. . . . Insároff still lay on the couch, but could not get to sleep, although he did not open his eyes. Eléna did not leave him: she dropped her work on her knees, and did not stir.

"Why dost not thou go to sleep?" she asked him at last.

"Why, here, wait."—He took her hand, and laid it under his head.—"There, that 's . . . .

good. Wake me immediately, when Renditch comes. If he says that the vessel is ready, we will set out immediately. . . . Everything must be packed."

"It will not take long to pack," replied Eléna.

"But that man babbled about a battle, about Servia,"—said Insároff, a little while later.—"He must have invented the whole of it. But we must go, we must. We must lose no time. . . . Be ready."

He fell asleep, and everything became silent in the room.

Eléna leaned her head against the back of her chair, and gazed for a long time out of the window. The weather had changed for the worse; the wind had risen. Large, white clouds were sweeping swiftly athwart the sky, a slender mast was swaying in the distance, a long pennant with a red cross rose and fell incessantly, rose and fell again. The pendulum of the ancient clock beat heavily, with a sort of mournful, hissing sound. Eléna closed her eyes. She had slept badly all night; gradually she sank into a doze.

She dreamed a strange dream. It seems to her that she is floating in a boat on the Tzarítzyn pond, with some people whom she does not know. They maintain silence, and sit motionless; no one is rowing; the boat moves along of its own volition. Eléna does not feel afraid, but

she finds it dull; she wants to discover who the people are, and why she is with them. She gazes, the pond widens out, the banks disappear —it is no longer a pond, but a troubled sea: vast, azure, silent waves rock the boat majestically; something rumbling and menacing rises from the bottom; her unknown fellow-travellers suddenly jump up, shout, flourish their arms . . . . . Eléna recognises their faces: her father is one of them. But some sort of a white whirlwind sweeps over the waves . . . . everything reels, grows confused . . . . .

Eléna surveys her surroundings; as before, everything round about is white. But it is snow, snow, a boundless expanse of snow. And she is no longer in a boat, she is driving in a travelling-sledge, as she did out of Moscow; she is not alone: by her side sits a tiny being, wrapped up in an old sleeved cloak. Eléna scrutinises it closely: it is Kátya, her poor little friend. Eléna grows frightened. "Is n't she dead?" she thinks.

"Kátya, whither are thou and I going?"

Kátya makes no reply, and wraps herself still more closely in her miserable little cloak. Eléna feels cold also; she gazes along the road: the town is visible far away, athwart a veil of snow-dust,—the lofty white towers with their silver domes . . . . "Kátya, Kátya, is this Moscow?" "No," thinks Eléna, "it is the Solovét-

zk Monastery:[1] there are a great many tiny, cramped cells there, as in a beehive; it is stifling, crowded there,—Dmítry is imprisoned there. I must set him free" . . . . All at once, a gray, yawning abyss opens in front of her. The travelling-sledge falls, Kátya laughs. "Eléna, Eléna!" a voice from the chasm makes itself heard.

"Eléna!" rang distinctly in her ears. She raised her head quickly, turned round, and was stupefied: Insároff, white as snow—the snow of her dream—had half-raised himself from the couch, and was gazing at her with brilliant, dreadful eyes. His hair lay dishevelled on his brow, his lips were open in a strange fashion. Horror, mingled with a sort of painful emotion, was expressed on his suddenly altered face.

"Eléna!"—he articulated;—"I am dying."

With a shriek she fell upon her knees, and pressed herself to his breast.

"All is over!"—repeated Insároff:—"I am dying! . . . Farewell, my poor child! Farewell, my own darling!" . . .

And he fell back at full length on the couch.

Eléna flew out of the room and began to call for help; the cameriere ran for the doctor. Eléna leaned over Insároff.

At that moment, on the threshold of the door, a broad-shouldered, sun-burned man made his

[1] In the White Sea.—TRANSLATOR.

appearance, clad in a thick frieze coat and a low-crowned oil-skin hat. He halted in perplexity.

"Renditch!"—exclaimed Eléna—"it is you! Look, for God's sake, he is in a swoon! What ails him? O God! O God! He was out of doors yesterday, he has just been talking to me . . . ."

Renditch said nothing, and merely moved aside. Past him slipped briskly a tiny figure in a wig and spectacles: he was a doctor who lived in the hotel. He went up to Insároff.

"Signora,"—he said, a few moments later,—"the stranger is dead—*il signore forestiere e morto*—from an aneurism, coupled with a malady of the lungs."

XXXV

On the following day, Renditch was standing at the window of that same room; in front of him, enveloped in a shawl, sat Eléna. In the adjoining room, Insároff was lying in his coffin. Eléna's face was both terrified and inanimate; two wrinkles had made their appearance on her forehead, between her eyebrows: they imparted a strained expression to her immovable eyes. On the window-sill lay an open letter from Anna Vasílievna. She invited her daughter to come to Moscow, if only for a month, complained of her loneliness, of Nikolái Artémievitch, sent her regards to Insároff, inquired about his health, and begged him to let his wife come.

Renditch was a Dalmatian, a sailor, with whom Insároff had become acquainted during his journey to his native land, and whom he had hunted up in Venice. He was a surly, rough, old man, and devoted to the Slavonic cause. He despised the Turks, and hated the Austrians.

"How long are you going to remain in Venice?" Eléna asked him in Italian. And her voice was as lifeless as her face.

"One day, in order to take on freight, and not

to arouse suspicion, and then I go straight to Zara. I shall not gladden my fellow-countrymen. They have been waiting for him this long while; their hopes were set on him."

"Their hopes were set on him,"—repeated Eléna mechanically.

"When shall you bury him?" asked Renditch.

Eléna did not reply at once.—"To-morrow."

"To-morrow? I will remain: I wish to cast a handful of earth into his grave. And I must help you. But it would be better to lay him in Slavonic earth."

Eléna glanced at Renditch.

"Captain,"—she said,—"take me with him, and carry us to the other side of the sea, far away from here. Can it be done?"

Renditch reflected.—"It can, only it will be bothersome. We shall have trouble with the cursed authorities here. But, assuming that we can arrange all that, and that we bury him yonder; how am I to get you back here?"

"You need not bring me back."

"What? Where will you stay?"

"I will find a place for myself; only take us—take me."

Renditch scratched the back of his head.—"As you like, but this is all very bothersome. I will go and find out: and do you await me here, a couple of hours hence."

He left the room. Eléna passed into the adjoining chamber, leaned against the wall, and stood there a long time, as though she had been turned to stone. Then she sank on her knees, but could not pray. In her soul there was no repining; she did not dare to ask God why He had not spared, why He had not shown compassion, had not saved; why He had chastised from on high the fault, if fault there had been. Each of us is guilty through the mere fact that he lives, and there is no thinker so great, there is no benefactor of mankind who, by virtue of the benefits he has conferred, can rely upon the right to live . . . . But Eléna could not pray: she was turned to stone.

That same night, a broad boat rowed away from the hotel where the Insároffs had resided. In the boat sat Eléna and Renditch, and a long box stood there covered with a black cloth.

They sailed for about an hour, and finally reached a small, two-masted vessel which was riding at anchor at the very mouth of the harbor. Eléna and Renditch boarded the vessel; the sailors carried the box on board. About midnight a storm arose, but by early morning the ship had passed the Lido. In the course of the day the storm raged with frightful violence, and the experienced sailors in the offices of "Lloyd's" shook their heads, and expected nothing good. The Adriatic Sea, between Venice, Trieste,

and the Dalmatian shore, is extremely dangerous.

Three weeks after Eléna's departure from Venice, Anna Vasílievna received in Moscow the following letter:

"My dear parents, I am bidding you farewell forever. You will never see me more. Dmítry died yesterday. All is at an end for me. To-day I am setting out for Zara with his body. I shall bury him, and what will become of me, I do not know! But I have no longer any fatherland except D's fatherland. An insurrection is in preparation there, they are making ready for war; I shall go as a sister of mercy: I shall nurse the sick, the wounded. I do not know what will become of me, but even after Dmítry's death I shall remain faithful to his memory, to his life's work. I have learned Bulgarian and Servian. Probably I shall not survive all this—so much the better. I have been brought to the verge of the abyss, and must fall in. Not in vain did Fate unite us: perhaps I killed him, who knows; now it is his turn to draw me after him. I sought happiness—and perchance I shall find death. Evidently, so it had to be; evidently, there was a fault . . . . But death palliates and reconciles all things,—does it not? Forgive me for all the sorrow I have caused you: it was against my will. But why should I return to Russia? What is there to do in Russia?

"Accept my last kisses and blessings, and do not condemn me." E.

About five years have passed since then, and no further news has arrived of Eléna. All let-

ters and inquiries have been fruitless: in vain did Nikolái Artémievitch himself, after the conclusion of peace, travel to Venice—to Zara; in Venice he learned what is already known to the reader, but in Zara no one could give him any decisive information concerning Renditch and the vessel which he had hired. Obscure rumours were in circulation, to the effect that, several years previously, the sea, after a violent storm, had cast up on the shore a coffin in which had been found the corpse of a man . . . . According to other, more trustworthy information, the coffin in question had not been cast up by the sea at all, but had been brought and interred close to the shore by a foreign lady who had come from Venice; some persons added that that lady had afterward been seen in Herzegovina with the army which was then assembling; they even described her attire, black from head to foot. At any rate, all trace of Eléna has vanished forever and irretrievably, and no one knows whether she is still alive, whether she is hiding herself somewhere, or whether the little game of life has already come to an end, whether the slight fermentation is ended, and death's turn has come. It sometimes happens that a man, on awaking, will ask himself, with involuntary terror:—" Can it be that I am already thirty . . . forty . . . . fifty years of age? How has life

passed so swiftly? How has death approached so near?" Death is like a fisherman who has caught a fish in his net, and leaves it there for a while in the water: the fish still swims, but the net is about it, and the fisherman will haul it in—when he sees fit.

WHAT has become of the other personages of our story?

Anna Vasílievna is still alive; she has aged greatly since the blow which overtook her; she grumbles less, but grieves much more. Nikolái Artémievitch also has grown old and gray, and has parted from Augustína Christiánovna. . . . He now curses everything foreign. His housekeeper, a handsome woman, a Russian, thirty years of age, goes about in silken gowns, and wears gold finger-rings and earrings. Kurnatóvsky, like a man with a temperament, and in his quality of an energetic dark-complexioned person, an admirer of fair-haired women, has married Zóya; he keeps her in strict subjection, and she has even ceased to think in German. Berséneff is in Heidelberg: he was sent abroad at the expense of the Government; he has visited Berlin and Paris, and is not wasting his time; he will turn out a clever philosopher. The learned public has taken notice of his articles "Concerning certain Peculiarities of the Old

Germanic Law, in the Matter of Judicial Punishments" and "Concerning the Significance of the Town Principle in the Question of Civilisation"; only it is a pity that both articles should be written in rather a heavy style and mottled with foreign words. Shúbin is in Rome; he has consecrated himself wholly to his art, and is regarded as one of the most remarkable and promising of the young sculptors. Strict tourists think that he has not sufficiently studied the ancients, that he has not "style," and reckon him as belonging to the French school; he has multitudes of orders from the English and the Americans. One of his bacchantes created a great sensation recently; the Russian Count Bóboshkin, the well-known plutocrat, was on the point of purchasing it for one thousand scudi, but preferred to give three thousand to another sculptor, a Frenchman *pur sang,* for a group representing "A young Peasant-girl dying of love on the breast of the Genius of Spring." Shúbin now and then corresponds with Uvár Ivánovitch, who alone has not changed in the least or in any way. "Do you remember," he wrote to him, lately, "what you said to me on the night when poor Eléna's marriage became known, when I was sitting on your bed and chatting with you? Do you remember, how I asked you then whether there would be men among us, and you answered me: 'There

will.' O black-earth force! And now, here, from this place, from my 'most beautiful distance,' once more I ask you:—Well, how now, Uvár Iványovitch, will there be any?"

Uvár Iványovitch wiggled his fingers, and riveted his enigmatic gaze on the distance.

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